

Lawyers attack police bugging code

Little other than the confessional will be off bounds in surveillance operations, reports Stewart Tendler

A DRAFT code of conduct allowing police to break in to homes or offices and bug suspects was published by the Home Office yesterday. It was immediately attacked by lawyers as a licence to spy on confidential meetings.

Earlier this year the Conservative Government passed the Police Act 1997, which legalised the use of police bugs and vehicle tracking devices to collect intelligence on those suspected of involvement in serious crimes.

Under the draft code, intrusive surveillance operations must be

authorised by a chief constable or his deputy and reported to a group of commissioners who will be current or former high court judges. Police will require agreement from a commissioner if they want to bug a home, hotel bedroom or office. They will also need agreement if the operation would involve access to confidential legal, journalistic or personal material, including medical and spiritual counselling. The code includes an

undertaking from the police and Customs that they will not bug the confessional.

If the investigation is urgent police can go ahead, but must report and justify their action to a commissioner as soon as possible. The commissioner can order the police to abandon an operation.

Alun Michael, the Home Office Minister responsible for the police, said he expected that up to seven commissioners would be appointed,

including a chief commissioner. He would act as arbiter between police and commissioners and present a report to Parliament each year.

Last year chief constables and Customs officers carried out 2,550 secret operations involving bugs and tracking devices under ad hoc Home Office arrangements.

Mr Michael said: "The public needs to be protected from the nasty and dangerous people involved in high-level crime. But it is essential that police and Customs powers are subject to effective safeguards and independent scrutiny. We must ensure people's liberties are protected."

But the Law Society announced it would fight for changes in the code. Roger Ede, the secretary of the society's criminal law committee, said it had been hoped the code would clear up deficiencies in the Act but it had not. The police could

bug lawyer's offices without showing any reasonable suspicion that the conversations involved criminal matters. Police were being given *carte blanche* to break the lawyer's privileged position. There was no mention of any disciplinary action against police who breached the Act.

The Liberal Democrats also maintained that the safeguards do not go far enough. Lord Rodgers of Quarry Bank, the party's home

affairs spokesman, said that bugging should be used as a last resort and where judicial authorisation had already been given.

Last night the Home Office said that a failure by a chief constable to comply with the criteria set out in the code was not a disciplinary matter. A commissioner would halt the intercept. Unauthorised bugging by junior officers would be subject to normal discipline.

Comments on the code must be received by the Home Office by September 30. The final draft must be approved by Parliament.

Railway cameras put more crooks in the frame

By LIN JENKINS

SURVEILLANCE around London's rail network completes a major refit this month, greatly improving the images recorded by cameras and making it easier to identify criminals from freeze-frames, even when lighting conditions are poor.

The network is the largest in Europe, with 1,500 cameras covering stations, approach roads, parking areas, platforms, ticket offices and shopping areas. New software enables images to be enhanced to sharpen the details.

The system had its inception in 1991 in response to the IRA bombing campaign in London, and was completed four years later. Sergeant David Cooper of the British Transport Police video unit said that new equipment would also allow officers to gather relevant recordings from a number of locations on one tape, without endless copying and editing.

"Within an hour of an incident being reported, we will have identified all the relevant tapes and be ready to start work," he said. "The system is designed so that if any point of the network should be damaged, this would not result in a loss of images to us. It would be extremely difficult to knock out the system."

Footage from the system has played a key role in the convictions of a number of criminals. Two brothers jailed for ten years at the Old Bailey last month for a "steaming" incident on a train to Deptford had been tracked through the system.

The London Underground also has a comprehensive camera system. A spokesman for British Transport Police said: "We do not stand still. The system is under constant review and we update it whenever technology provides something to enhance our surveillance."



The three Princes face the media on a pebbled beach by the Dee. A further Balmoral photo-call has been promised

Balmoral photo-call for Princes

Continued from page 1

the country by media intrusion.

Officials said that the event had been arranged last Thursday, before the pictures of Dodi and Di appeared. "It is something we have been looking at for some time, to see how we could work with the press to meet their needs and allow the children to have a private holiday with their father. It is an experiment. If this does not work, it will never happen again," Ms Henney said.

It appeared, however, to work. By the time the Princes emerged from the woods, just after 10am, accompanied by Prince William's black Labrador, Wigeon, and his father's Jack Russell, Tiger, the morning mist had lifted to be replaced by weak summer sunshine.

Wigeon was the first to appear, unselfconsciously snuffling among the pebbles. But as soon as she noticed the assembled media, she did an about-turn. There was no such retreat for the Prince of Wales in his kilt of Balmoral tartan as he strode out of the wood and on to the beach with a shepherd's crook, followed by his two sons.

At first both William and



The royal newlyweds in 1981 — 15 miles upstream

Harry, both in casual trousers and shirtsleeves, seemed disconcertingly fascinated by their feet as they gingerly picked their way over the pebbles and rocks to the

shoreline. The small party exchanged only a few words, and walked apart during the five-minute session. Harry skimmed a pebble over the water and occasionally ventured a smile at the cameras.

But William, taking after his mother in her early days of fame, studiously ignored all pleas to look up. Instead he threw stones into the water for Wigeon, while his father leaned on his crook attempting to look as though he was out for a normal stroll.

Wigeon was the one who finally broke the ice. All three Princes broke out in smiles as she splashed like a puppy at the shoreline vainly searching for a pebble thrown by her master. The trio then stood rather stiffly in a line, smiling, before turning back to the wood and, they hoped, their private holiday. It was only then that William finally responded to a photographer's plea and glanced up through his eyelashes with a shy smile — the very image of his mother.

Afterwards the Prince's press secretary looked pleased. No one had shouted questions about Dodi, or about Camilla. The ladies and gentlemen of the press had behaved. But it may not last. Ian Lundy of the local North Scot press agency said yesterday: "If a story breaks about Diana or Camilla, there is no way we can ignore the fact that Charles is at Balmoral."

Explorer honoured for rescue of Arctic traveller

By ROBIN YOUNG

THE British explorer David Hempleman-Adams is to receive one of the country's highest honours for his part in saving the life of an Arctic adventurer.

Mr Hempleman-Adams, of Box, Wiltshire, and his fellow explorer, Rune Gjeldnes, of Norway, have been awarded Royal Humane Society bronze medals for their rescue of a lone Arctic traveller who had fallen through ice into the sea during a solo attempt on the North Pole.

In temperatures of -70C Mr Hempleman-Adams and Mr Gjeldnes cleared a 200-metre landing strip on ice that was in constant danger of breaking up, so that a plane could land to rescue Alan Bywaters, who was suffering from hypothermia and frostbite.

Mr Hempleman-Adams, a veteran of 29 major expeditions which have resulted in two friends losing their lives, wrote in his report to the society about the incident in March: "I have been in some major scrapes. However, I would count this rescue as the most hazardous or risky to my life that I have encountered."

The society's citation says Mr Bywaters had fallen through ice and had lost his survival equipment, radio, food, stove and fuel. He managed to get out of the sea and followed the tracks of the Hempleman-Adams team, who were trying to reach the North Pole without support, until he reached them.

After giving first aid Mr Hempleman-Adams and Mr Gjeldnes erected radio antennae to call for assistance. Then they cleared and marked a landing strip, guided the plane in and manhandled Mr Bywaters aboard in a sledge. Because of the strain the incident put on them and their equipment and food supplies, Mr Hempleman-Adams and Mr Gjeldnes then had to abandon their own expedition.

Consortiums compete for benefits system

The first step towards privatising part of the benefits system was announced yesterday. Three consortiums were given the go-ahead to "shadow" area directorates of the Benefits Agency for up to a year. If any of them can demonstrate ways to provide better value for money and improved service, it will be considered as a candidate to take over management of benefit offices.

The areas are London and Anglia, Yorkshire, and the West Country. The move follows a decision two weeks ago by Harriet Harman, the Social Security Secretary, to press ahead with the previous Government's plans to sell off the properties in which benefits offices are housed.

Brussels tax rejected

Plans to give the European Commission more say on alcohol and tobacco taxation have been attacked by the Government. Dawn Primarolo, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, has told MPs in a memo that the Government's "significant" powers over revenue from alcohol and tobacco could be at stake. She insists that all 15 member states must be unanimous on any changes to decision-making on taxes.

Sinn Fein exclusion plea

Sinn Fein began legal action to challenge the exclusion of its two MPs from Westminster unless they swear allegiance to the Queen. Martin McGuinness, MP for Mid Ulster, filed papers with Northern Ireland's High Court seeking a judicial review of the requirement that he and Gerry Adams, MP for West Belfast, take the oath of allegiance before taking their seats.

Poteen pilgrimage

An Irish priest is trying to make poteen, the fiery alcoholic drink traditionally made from potatoes, into a legal tourist attraction. Canon Donal O'Driscoll believes that a poteen pilgrimage, taking visitors from one still to another on a route from Donegal to Conemara, Kerry and Cork, could bring illegal poteen-makers into the open and enable the authorities to regulate quality and manufacture.

Boys on burglary spree

Police say they are powerless to halt two boys aged 13 and 15 who are being blamed for a crime wave in Gosport, Hampshire. The boys, believed to have broken into 40 homes in five months, have been arrested 15 times in six weeks and charged with a number of offences, but because of their ages have not been remanded in custody. Police are advising residents to be vigilant.

Don't call me Master

Sue Wilks is challenging the traditional titles of degrees. Ms Wilks, 37, who is studying feminist history at Leeds University, wants to be awarded a Mistress of Arts degree. She says other female students should be allowed to study for Spinster of Arts degrees, rather than Bachelor of Arts. She is seeking legal advice to see if she can force Leeds University to recognise gender on all its degree courses.



Rare bird is mass killer

A population of one of the world's rarest seabirds, the great skua, killed and ate about 200,000 other seabirds, including kittiwakes, puffins, fulmars and Arctic terns, on the Shetland Islands last year, according to a study for Scottish Natural Heritage. The skuas' diet changed during a temporary shortage of sand eels, and they might now be culled to protect the other birds.

Constable country threat

Foreign tourists are threatening to destroy the landscape immortalised by Constable in *The Haywain* — Dedham Vale on the Essex-Suffolk border. In a special assessment of the area, the Countryside Commission warns of the damage mass tourism can do. Local people blame the British Tourist Authority's policy of enticing visitors away from London, and extended ferry services to Harwich.

Legion attacks Labour for war pensions volte-face

By POLLY NEWTON, POLITICAL REPORTER

LABOUR was accused by the Royal British Legion yesterday of breaking a pre-election pledge to war pensioners. The legion said the party had promised that a Labour Government would review the system that allows local authorities to "penalise" veterans because of their war pension income.

Councils are legally obliged to disregard war pension income of at least £16 a week — but they can choose to ignore the entire amount — when assessing entitlement to housing benefit and help with council tax bills. This discrepancy leaves pensioners in some areas significantly worse off than others. Fourteen councils, most of them Labour-controlled, disregard only the minimum £10, and a further 30 disregard less than the full amount.

In 1995, Eric Martlew, then a Labour defence spokesman, said: "An incoming Labour Government would review this policy of disregard." However, the Department of Social Security now says there are no

plans for a review. John Aston, of the legion said: "We are disappointed and a lot of the people we represent, including people without war pensions, are very angry. It is something we won't let drop."

The 14 councils that ignore only the statutory £10 of war pension are: Chester-le-Street, Derwentside, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Newcastle upon Tyne, Sunderland, Easington, Wear Valley, Gateshead, Redcar and Cleveland, Manchester, Liverpool, Oswestry and Norwich.

Both daughters underwent operations, but will develop breathing problems in later life. As there was no history of heart problems in the family, doctors said it was extremely unusual for both girls to be born with the same problem.

Tony Flint, the association's regional organiser, said fellow ex-servicemen were devastated by Mr Carr's death. "Paul's death underlines the need for very urgent action. We are dying off at the rate of two a month. This Government is giving us more talk than the previous one, but still there is no action." The association be-

Gulf campaigner dies at 30

Continued from page 1

lieves that there have been more than 100 deaths from Gulf War illness and thousands have suffered symptoms. The Government said



Carr: "a big voice"

last month that it wanted a "new beginning" on the subject and promised £6.5 million to fund research.

Hilary Meredith, a Manchester-based solicitor acting for veterans, said that Mr Carr's death had hit his colleagues hard. "He was a very big voice in the association and spoke extensively to raise the public image of the case," she said.

"He is the twenty-seventh client to die since we started acting on this case and it has to stop now. The Government has to take this extremely seriously. Never mind all the investigations; just find some treatment fast before any more of our clients go the same way."

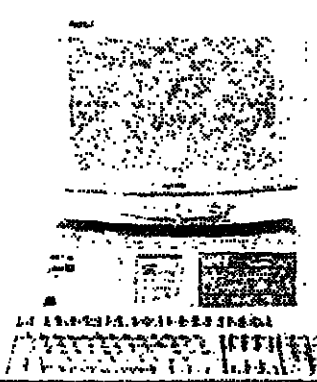
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Nun's kiss ruined Singing Vicar's charity fraud

By PAUL WILKINSON

A BOGUS bishop who billed himself as The Singing Vicar and tricked the public out of at least £250,000 in charity donations was exposed when he was seen kissing one of his collectors.

Liverpool Crown Court was told that David Valentine appeared on stage in pubs along with "singing nuns". He employed designers and printers to create false authorisation badges, produced bogus labels for collecting tins, created sashes for female collectors to wear and regularly emptied full tins into a holdall and replaced the seals. The money, intended for genuine charities, was never seen again.

Valentine, 38, told the jury that his act was "a bit like you may have seen in the film *Sister Act* with Whoopi Goldberg. I wear a white robe and a bishop's hat and everyone in the audience sings along."

The court was told that the charities involved included Leukaemia Research, the Royal School for the Blind, Clatterbridge Hospital Cancer Research Trust, the Salvation Army and the Royal Liverpool Hospital Forgive Me Not Cancer Appeal. Valentine also made money over a number of years from pub and street collections, jumble sales and charity shops.

Valentine, who posed as an ordained minister of various churches, had initially made a living singing in pubs and running a removals business. In the 1980s he became a street collector for the Salvation Army but was banned after complaints.

However, he still made col-



Valentine: he compared his show to *Sister Act*

lections which never reached their destination. Ten years ago he started a chain of charity shops across Merseyside, but most of the proceeds went into his own pockets.

During the five-week trial, David Boulton, for the prosecution, said that Valentine was arrested outside a pub in Birkenhead with "a fraudster's kit" in his car. Earlier that evening, he had been in the pub with his dog collar on when one of his collectors had come in. He had left and returned without the collar and the collector came back into the premises minus her charity sash and identification badge and joined him at the bar. The landlady demanded an explanation when they

were seen kissing, then rang the police.

Valentine, from Upton, Cheshire, who was jailed for four years, had denied three charges of conspiring to obtain donations by deception. But Judge John Morgan told him he had been convicted on overwhelming evidence. The judge said: "This was a long-term, well-organised, deliberate course of dishonesty. You used your former connections with a Toxteth church and with the Salvation Army to dress as a clergyman, adding credibility to your collections and your collectors. But you were not a genuine man of God collecting for good causes. You were a charlatan and fraud."

He said that perhaps the worst aspect of Valentine's behaviour was the effect it would undoubtedly have on the willingness of the public to give to genuine collectors.

"Not surprisingly they fear that their money may not be going to its proper destination and so are reluctant to give at all. Your conduct has made the task of genuine collectors that much more difficult and the scepticism of the public to grow when presented with a collecting box."

Ian Wilkinson, 40, of Wallasey, who was convicted of conspiring with Valentine and admitted a similar offence committed after Valentine's arrest in February 1995, was jailed for 15 months. Similar charges against Terence Bryant, 59, of Birkenhead, on which a jury could not decide, and Diane Mitchell, 41, of Birkenhead, were laid on the file. They had denied the charges.

Dating agency says widow was Mrs Wrong

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

A WIDOW who claims that she left a dating agency because it matched her with a string of unsuitable men was dropped by the agency because she pestered one of her suitors, a court was told yesterday.

Susan Constable, 39, is seeking a refund of her £370 membership fee from Initial Approach, which she left after complaining that she was introduced to "fat men, bald men and men who could not or dare not drive."

Yesterday Stirling Sheriff Court was told that Mrs Constable's membership had been terminated because of complaints from one of the partners found for her.

Mrs Constable, 39, who has since found a boyfriend without the help of a dating agency, launched a small claims action for a refund from Susan Menoni, head of the agency. She said at an earlier hearing that Initial Approach had sent her details of 14 men who were nearly all unsuitable. Having requested a local non-smoker who could take her for drives in the country, she said that she was offered a man who was too scared to drive, another who could hardly see, one who lived 200 miles away and several unrepentant smokers.

Tom Murray, for Initial Approach, told Sheriff Robert Younger yesterday: "Mrs Constable is saying her membership was cancelled when she made a complaint. Mrs Menoni is saying her membership was cancelled because her behaviour was in breach of the company's code of conduct."

He said that letters written by Mrs Constable to another client that she was dating had been in breach of the code of conduct. Sheriff Younger ruled that a full hearing would begin on September 29. Out-

side court Mrs Menoni, 47, said Mrs Constable had only started to complain after her relationship with another member had broken down. She said the Dunblane-based agency had a good record, with 22 weddings in four years and six in the pipeline.

She had refused to refund Mrs Constable's membership fee because of her inappropriate behaviour. "We received complaints of an extremely serious nature about her behaviour from the man whom she had hoped to marry," Mrs Menoni said. "Since her membership was terminated, Mrs Constable has waged a campaign against us in the form of phone calls and letters. In November of last year we were eventually forced to involve the police."

Mrs Constable, of Greenloaning, Perthshire and Kinross, was widowed when her husband, Peter, died of a brain tumour three years ago. Outside court yesterday, she denied behaving in a threatening manner and said she was crusading for others unhappy with the agency. "There is such a stigma attached to dating agencies that people with a grievance will not stand up for themselves."



Menoni: refused refund of membership fee

Shave was too close for cat

A PERSIAN cat taken to the vet for a routine shave for matted fur got a more extensive cut than it expected.

The eight-month kitten called Courtney, whose lilac fur meant its offspring could command prices of up to £200, was to be used for breeding by its owners, Leona Flynn-Hudson and her husband, Craig, of Wardley, Tyne and Wear.

When Mr Flynn-Hudson collected the kitten from the White Lion Veterinary Clinic, he was shocked to find that it

had been spayed. Mrs Flynn-Hudson said yesterday that she thought the vet could have misread "clip and shave" in the surgery diary for "clip and spay". Now she plans to sue the clinic.

"My husband was told she would have to be given tablets each day because of the operation. He said there must have been a mistake and asked if he had been handed the right cat. That is when the vet realised what had happened."

"When I found out I was

having kittens I was so mad. I couldn't believe the cat could have gone in for a shave and come out spayed. She looked so down when she came home. Craig and I were both very sad."

The couple have been offered £450 by the Veterinary Defence Society, an insurer which is handling the case, but their solicitor has turned down the offer. The society and the clinic, in South Heston, Tyne and Wear, both declined to comment yesterday.



Jill Wilson with her four-month-old baby Anthony: she was killed as she pushed his pram

Victims' family criticises driver, 86

By LIN JENKINS

A WOMAN of 86 who died at the wheel of her car, which went out of control and killed a young mother and critically injured a four-month-old baby, should never have been driving, the victims' family said yesterday.

David Wilson, whose sister-in-law Jill was killed as she pushed her baby's pram in Fleet, Hampshire, said: "It's terrible the motorist died, but what on earth was she doing behind the wheel at her age?"

Governments should introduce regular check-ups for drivers as soon as they reach a certain age and, if they don't come up to scratch, then their licences should be taken away."

Mrs Wilson's baby, Anthony, underwent brain surgery after Monday's accident. Yesterday he was in a stable condition in intensive care at the regional paediatric neurological centre at King's College Hospital. His father Ian Wilson was visiting him. The couple's two-year-old daughter Victoria saw her mother

die. Mrs Wilson, 24, was a driving instructor.

The car was driven by Winifred Fletcher, whose son Michael said: "On behalf of my mother's family, I would like to say that we are all deeply shocked. Our thoughts are with the victims."

Police said they would look at Mr Fletcher's medical history. At 70, motorists must be passed fit to drive by their doctor.

Medical briefing, page 7

Britons forced out of top hotel

By HARVIA ELLIOTT
TRAVEL CORRESPONDENT

MORE than 200 British holidaymakers were evacuated from a leading all-inclusive Jamaican beach resort yesterday after striking hotel workers forced its closure.

The five-star Renaissance Jamaica Grande near Ocho Rios is being picketed by hotel workers fighting for union recognition. Within 24 hours the hotel ran out of food and drink and had to cull in fleets of buses to take nearly 1,500 guests to other hotels.

The British holidaymakers were all clients of airfares and had paid £1,550 each for the two-week holiday. Airfares representatives in Jamaica have found alternative accommodation in more expensive properties but some guests have been forced to stay in smaller hotels.

We had no warning of the strike at all until the staff walked out on Sunday," an Airfares spokesman said.

The strike started after the hotel refused to allow the staff a poll to elect union representatives. They were ordered by the Jamaica Supreme Court to recognise the union but apparently ignored it.

Vince Morrison, the union's local superior, said: "Workers are fed up with the working conditions and are prepared to go all the way, regardless of the consequences."



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Grammar tests too tough for teachers

By DAVID CHARTER

COMPULSORY English grammar tests for 14-year-olds have been cancelled next year after teachers said they did not know how to teach sentence construction.

This summer's trial of the 50-minute exam, planned for all schools next year, was taken up by only a quarter of secondaries. Protests from many English teachers about the difficulty of teaching subordinate clauses and adverbial phrases has convinced the Government to excuse most schools, although 100 will be chosen to try out a modified paper.

A spokeswoman for the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority said yesterday: "We are extending the pilot tests for another year in grammar, spelling and punctuation, to fine-tune them based on feedback from teachers."

Top professions prefer 'Ivy League' graduates

Students told to study universities' job prospects, reports David Charter

AN IVY League of traditional universities is favoured by high-earning professions seeking to recruit the brightest graduates, according to a survey of employers. Oxford, Cambridge and Bristol Universities provide most recruits for firms of solicitors, barristers, merchant bankers, accountants and actuaries.

The findings come as it emerged that none of the top three universities have places left for October in clearing, the annual scramble by candidates who miss their target grades for vacant courses, which begins tomorrow once the A-level results come out. There will be some places available at the next most successful universities identified by professional companies: Durham, Manchester, King's College London, Birmingham and Nottingham.

The survey, by the MPW group of independent sixth-form colleges, is a warning to thousands of students expected to join clearing to escape the Government's introduc-

tion of annual £1,000 university course fees next year.

Joe Ruston, of MPW, said: "There are signals this year that you should try to save the cost of course fees by going to any university, but if it does not confer much in the way of job prospects, it is going to look like a false saving in the long run. I do not think the hysterical comments about rushing into university this year are very sophisticated. We are talking about people's income over a long period." Research into universities' gra-

duate employment prospects would pay dividends, he said.

Several former polytechnics made their mark in the survey, led by the University of the West of England, at 39th with 12 graduates at the top firms. London Guildhall, Oxford Brookes and Anglia Polytechnic University shared 47th place ahead of some traditional universities with eight recruits apiece.

The findings confirm the conclusion of *Great Expectations*, an analysis of the experiences and expectations of

more than 5,000 final year students at 21 institutions published earlier this year. It found that the growing number of graduates seemed to be convincing employers to concentrate on a narrower, not wider, range of institutions.

Many school-leavers are ignorant of the financial demands that will be made on them at university, a NatWest Bank survey showed yesterday. They are also becoming increasingly tolerant about the prospect of being in debt, with half of those surveyed agreeing that debt is just part of student lifestyle.

The survey of pupils from 50 secondary schools showed that 61 per cent of sixth formers believed they would not have to borrow money at university, although at least 74 per cent of undergraduates are in debt.

Daily listings of degree-course vacancies start in *The Times* tomorrow with a comprehensive 16-page guide to clearing.

WHERE FIRMS FIND TALENT

Graduates recruited in the past three years by leading firms of solicitors, barristers, merchant bankers, accountants and actuaries

Oxford	78	Warwick	48
Cambridge	75	Leeds	46
Bristol	55	Southampton	46
Durham	54	Edinburgh	46
Manchester	54	Sheffield	42
King's College	53	UCI	38
Birmingham	50	Cardiff	33
Nottingham	50	York	32
Exeter	49	City	30
LSE	49	Newcastle	30



Kevin Artt and his girlfriend Erin Riley after the extradition hearing yesterday

America sends back Maze trio

A JUDGE in San Francisco yesterday ruled that three men who had escaped from a prison in Northern Ireland would not be punished for their political views if returned to British custody and ordered them to be extradited to Britain. Kevin Artt, Pol-

Brennan and Terence Kirby, all alleged members of the IRA who escaped from Northern Ireland's Maze prison in 1983, were arrested in California between 1992 and 1994. Artt and Kirby were convicted of murder, and Brennan on explosives charges. In his writ-

ten ruling, District Judge Charles Legge said: "Respondents were convicted because they committed serious crimes, not because they are Catholics or Nationalists. A killing is still a crime, regardless of the banner under which the criminal stands."



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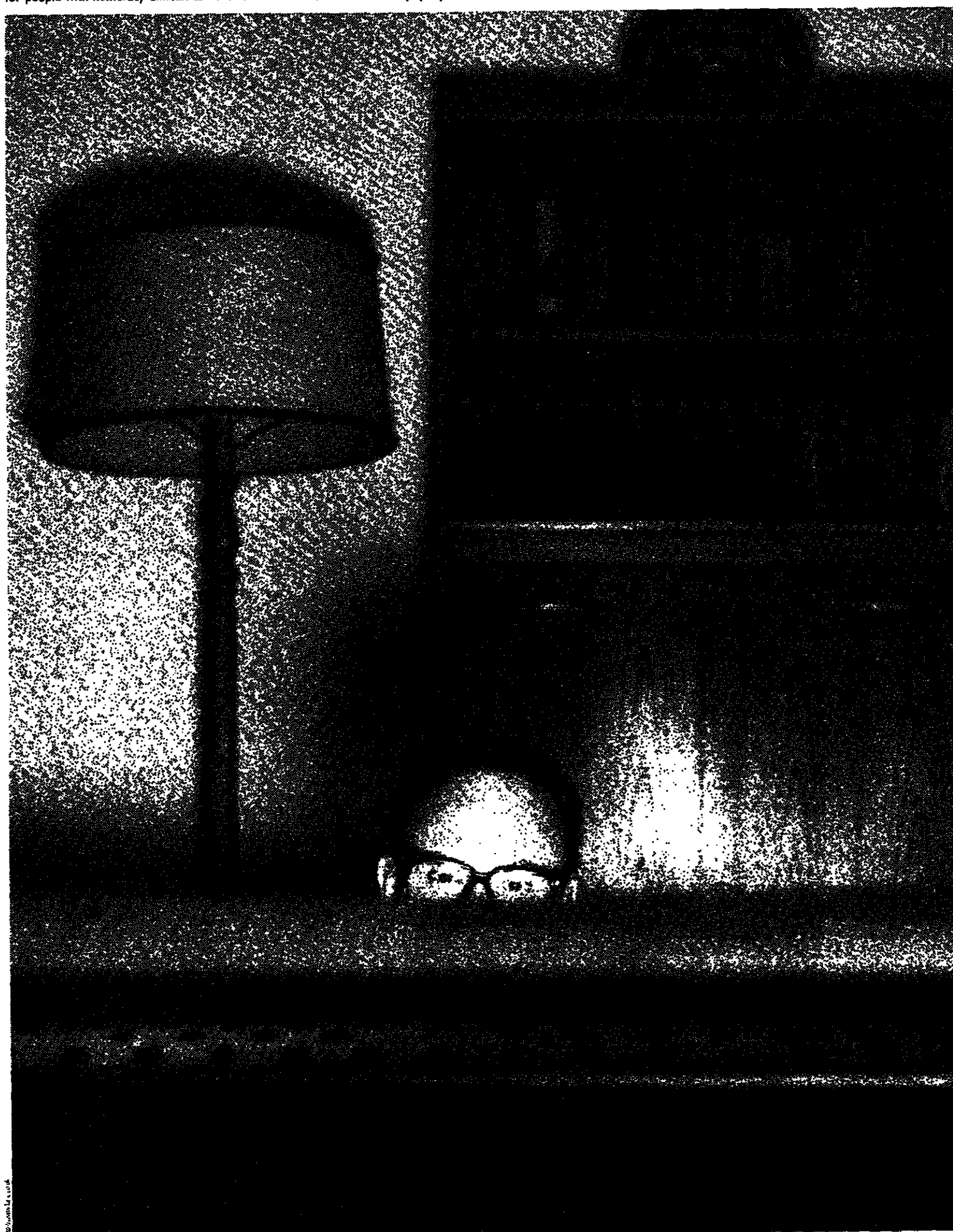
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old Mr. Gibbins's, below, being one of them.) 'The Learning Zone' meanwhile, is designed for viewers who want to record programmes during the night, then watch later.

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Trinity students lobby for return of Home Rule

By AUDREY MAGEE, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

AS SINN FEIN prepares for political battle in pursuit of its goal of a united Ireland, a group of Roman Catholic students in the Irish Republic are struggling for reunification with Britain and a return to Home Rule.

During freshers' week the Independent Unionist Association at Trinity College Dublin will erect a stand calling on people to join their cause. David Christopher, 19, a history student, has founded the movement of Irish people most of them Catholic - who would prefer to be British.

"I do not subscribe to the concept that Irishness and Britishness are mutually exclusive," he said. "I would think that they are mutually inclusive as we share the same language, history and culture. We are a natural political unit."

The association, which has ten members, wants an end to what it sees as the failed Irish State, born in 1922 out of a nationalist struggle to force Britain from Ireland. Mr Christopher, who comes from a non-Unionist background in Galway, refers to Britain as the "mainland" - a term that is anathema to most Irish Catholics. He said that he had more in common with Britain as he watched English tele-

vision and read English papers and was proud to be called a "West Brit".

While reunification with Britain is a long-term goal, his organisation wants Ireland to return to the Commonwealth, British passports for any Irish citizens who want them and the deletion of Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution laying claim to Northern Ireland. The Irish national anthem should also be scrapped because it is, the association claims, offensive to most Irish people.

The association has been growing for the past year under the guidance of Derek Simpson, 40, a Protestant micro-electronics researcher at the university. "Breaking the link with Britain was a mistake," he said. "Republicanism and nationalism has done more to divide people than any bombing campaign and I would also fault the Catholic Church and the Christian brothers for all the untruths that they have pumped out over the years about Unionism."

The association has made contact with David Trimble's Ulster Unionist Party, Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party, the Orange Order and the Apprentice Boys.

Masked saboteurs attack American grouse shooters

By ROBIN YOUNG AND MICHAEL HORNSEY

SABOTEURS yesterday attacked a party of Americans on the opening day of the grouse-shooting season.

The saboteurs were said to have confronted the group after a day's shooting at Gilmorby Moor, two miles south of Bowes, in Co Durham. Some of the gang, armed with staves and wearing balaclavas and ski masks, attacked the guns and left at least six people needing first aid. Up to 70 police officers were sent to the moor.

The British Field Sports Society said last night: "A party of elderly American gentlemen were attacked and several of them were injured, though mercifully none of them seriously. Once again it is a case of serious and wanton violence from the saboteurs."

"One of the gentlemen in the shooting party received a black eye while others were distressed and shaken. They came to enjoy a week's shooting in a very beautiful part of England and end up being attacked like this. It was an appalling incident."

Durham police said: "Officers on the moor say no shooting was taking place when the two sides clashed. Police are also investigating claims that cameras and camera bags were stolen during the flare-up."

The first day of the season in England got off to a



Grouse is already on London hotel menus

slow start, with many sportsmen electing to wait a week or two before reaching for their guns. In Scotland, there was more activity, with many small family shoots getting under way, although cold and wet weather in May and June had affected the incubation of many young birds in southeast Scotland.

The first birds were on offer at the Savoy and Connaught hotels for dinner last night, but with August 12 falling in the midst of an oppressive heatwave, many other establishments had decided to go without supplies.

"With the weather like this, and anyone who can afford them already sunning themselves on a yacht in the South of France, what is the point?" asked Nico Ladens of Chez Nico at Ninety Park Lane. "Eating them without hanging means they are simply stinky and flavourless."

Computers gets its

trapped in car dies

to bring

Computer tax program gets its figures wrong

Software confused pounds and pence and missed out allowances, reports Mark Henderson

ACCOUNTANTS and the Inland Revenue are warning taxpayers to be wary of using computer software to calculate their self-assessment tax returns, after 50,000 users were told that they may have submitted incorrect forms because of programming errors.

Intuit, one of the world's leading publishers of personal tax software, said that users of its QuickTax 97 product could have overpaid or underpaid their bills because of problems with the program. The company said that it would pay any fines incurred by customers, and would consider paying interest where customers had overpaid.

The Inland Revenue said yesterday that taxpayers should be cautious about relying on software to fill in their tax returns, which have to be submitted by the end of January if taxpayers are calculating how much they owe.

The deadline is September 30 for those who want the Inland Revenue to work out the amount due. "People must use their judgment properly and remember that ultimately they are responsible for checking information is correct," a spokesman said. "We do not recommend that people lean too heavily on a computer aid."

Elspeth May, a tax partner with the accountants KPMG, said she would advise taxpayers, against using computer software to complete their forms. "We are even having problems with our professional software, because it is the first year of self-assessment," she said.

"I think it is probably too much to ask of taxpayers to do a self-assessment form for the first time, and to use a computer package at the same time. There is a place for the computer systems, but people would normally be

better off spending the money on an accountant or chartered tax adviser."

She said that chartered accountants and chartered tax advisers were bound by a professional code, which offered taxpayers some protection if errors were made in their returns. Taxpayers face fines of £100 for forms that are returned late or completed incorrectly.

The Inland Revenue sent out more than eight million self-assessment forms in April, and has already received 2.5 million returns. About half the forms so far submitted have been filled in incorrectly, and about 10 per cent have had to be returned to taxpayers for further information.

Tony Macklin, marketing manager of Intuit UK, said the software had missed out some allowances and confused pounds with pence. "There are teething problems, but we are standing by our product and will do all

we can to help customers with it," he said. "Penalties are unlikely because customers are more likely to have overpaid, but if there are any we will pay them."

He said it was hard to estimate the numbers affected because QuickTax 97 is available only with the firm's Quicken personal finance package, and that not all the 50,000 Quicken users in Britain would have used it to fill in their tax returns. Users will be sent replacement software before September 30, the first deadline for returns to be submitted. Intuit also markets tax software in the United States, Germany, Australia and Canada, which all have self-assessment tax systems.

Intuit UK has opened a freephone helpline for customers concerned about tax returns compiled with QuickTax 97. It is 0800 731 1958.

Crab gathering catches scientist by surprise

By Nick Nuttall, Environment Correspondent

A SCIENTIST who stumbled on a vast gathering of crabs, covering the size of a tennis court and ten animals deep, may have unravelled the mystery of why the crustaceans hold mass meetings.

Ken Collins, a marine scientist at Southampton University, spotted the enormous mound of spiny spider crabs while diving off Burton Bradstock, near Bridport, Dorset. "I have been diving for 25 years and in all that time I have never seen aggregations anywhere near this size," he said yesterday.

"Although there is documentation that spiny crabs come together in this way periodically, no one yet fully knows why or can predict where and when these mass meetings take place."

Dr Collins, of the university's department of oceanology, estimates that he saw 50,000 crabs weighing about 10 tonnes. Spiny spider crabs, which can grow to the size of a human hand, are common in Britain. They are exported to the Continent where they are prized for their sweet meat.

Some scientists believe the mass meetings bring males and females together for mating. But Dr Collins said: "Let's face it, you do not need to get together with thousands of others to mate."

He believes the gatherings provide security in numbers

at a vulnerable period in the crabs' lives. "Unlike creatures with an internal skeleton, crustaceans have a hard exoskeleton which they must shed each time they grow. Underneath their shells, crabs are soft and therefore extremely vulnerable to predation in the hours between moulting an old, tight shell and the new shell hardening."

Dr Collins said: "Most lobsters and crabs crawl into a hole to develop their new shells out of sight of predators. The spiny spider crab's behaviour gives small, young crabs protection beneath older, tougher adults."

"I have dived all over the world, from the Caribbean to the Great Barrier Reef, yet this is the most amazing sight I have ever seen and right on my doorstep," Dr Collins said.

He asked divers and beachcombers to alert him about similar sightings and also discoveries of large numbers of crab shells on the shore.

A golden haddock has been landed off the Scilly Isles. The 4lb haddock stood out like a goldfish among a catch of its grey peers. David Stevens, a trawler skipper, said: "It is now in a Ministry of Agriculture freezer awaiting examination. Silja Swaby, of the National Marine Aquarium in Plymouth, said: "The melanin pigment is absent, so it's really an albino."



Some of the 50,000 spiny spider crabs, four metres down in waters off Dorset

Girl trapped in lake car dies

By Paul Wilkinson

THE seven-year-old girl who was trapped in a water-filled car for 40 minutes has died. Cherrie Greenwood survived for four days. She was pulled from a lake by firemen, who used their breathing apparatus as aqualungs and weighted themselves with rocks to reach the car.

Andrew Jakeman, the firefighter from Selby, North Yorkshire, who pulled her clear, said yesterday: "My heart goes out to the family. I am devastated Cherrie did not make it."

Cherrie's mother, Stephany, 22, and stepfather, Roy Olbison, 22, were at her bedside when she died on Monday night at Leeds General Infirmary. Cherrie was trapped when the family's VW Golf accidentally rolled backwards on Friday into the 20ft deep disused quarry near Pontefract, Yorkshire, known locally as the Blue Lagoon.

Her mother escaped through an open window.

The parents, from Lower Ackworth, near Pontefract, who have an 18-month-old son, Joseph, were too distressed to talk. Mr Olbison's stepmother, Pat, said: "They never left her side and talked to her all the time. It's such a tragedy. Cherrie was very noisy and lively. She was a lovely girl."

Wayne Hamer, accident and emergency consultant at the infirmary, said young children had been known to recover after spending more than an hour under water.

"When water hits the face it triggers a diving reflex, and combined with the cold water, the heart slows, very, very rapidly. But the heart is still beating and the child drifts into unconsciousness as the metabolic rate drops... That is why we continue prolonged resuscitation techniques."

Thirsty signalman closes line to have a cup of tea

By Paul Wilkinson

A THIRSTY signalman abandoned his box and went home for a cup of tea, leaving two trainloads of passengers stranded in 80C temperatures without any refreshments of their own.

More than 60 travellers were trapped after the parched Railtrack worker locked his signals in the line-closed position and knocked off early from his box in the Yorkshire Dales. More people had to wait at stations along the line.

The passengers' plight was intensified by the knowledge that the usual buffet trolleys packed with iced drinks were not on board because the caterers had failed to turn up. By 10.50am he could take no more. He locked the old-style semaphore signals in the down position so trains could not pass and left, walking a mile across the open moor to where his car was parked. He then drove ten miles home for a brew.

His action halted the 9.47am Leeds to Carlisle train for an hour and 15 minutes in sight of waiting passengers at Settle station. It also stopped the 10.47am service further down the line. When the second signalman came on

duty both trains were combined at 12.05pm.

The worker, who has not been identified, was being questioned by senior Railtrack managers yesterday. Bill Heard, a spokesman for Regional Railways North East, which runs the train service, said: "Scores of passengers were affected. We also had a problem because European Catering Service, for some reason, did not turn up for the trains. That is a matter we are investigating. We want to know exactly why this man shut down the box and consequently shut down the line. We can only apologise."

One passenger, Steven Briggs, of Sunderland, said: "It was boiling on that train and we were all thirsty. The signalman had a job to do and it is no good just walking out and leaving us stuck in the middle of nowhere, even if he does want a cup of tea."

Lottery to bring Saxon burial site to life

By Michael Hornsby

A GRANT of £3.6 million has been awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund to improve public access to one of Britain's most important archaeological treasures, the 7th-century burial ground of Saxon chieftains at Sutton Hoo in Suffolk.

The National Trust, which was offered the 232-acre Sutton Hoo Estate as a gift two years ago, said yesterday that the aim was to attract 50,000 visitors a year to the site on the River Deben, near Woodbridge.

A further £1.06 million will come from bequests to the trust and from donations by



Gold clasps and a buckle found at Sutton Hoo

the Annie Trimmer Charitable Trust, which previously owned the estate. Suffolk County Council, the Rural Development Commission and the European Union. The trust is to launch a

separate appeal for £100,000 to bring the total funding to £4.66 million.

Work will start next year on a visitor centre, a shop, a tearoom and an explanatory exhibition hall, all to open in

2000. A car park and a network of footpaths round the site should be ready by 1999.

Peter Rooley, publicity officer for the Sutton Hoo Society, said: "Sutton Hoo has long been a mecca for archaeologists, but it has not had a high public profile hitherto. We are delighted the funds now exist to bring the site to a much wider audience."

Professor Martin Carver, director of the Sutton Hoo Research Trust, said: "Sutton Hoo is a beacon of knowledge for the formation of the early kingdoms of Dark Age Europe, and this award will allow a first class on-site

presentation of its unique contribution to history."

The importance of the site was revealed in 1939 when, at the instigation of the landowner, a tumulus was excavated to reveal the outline of a clinker-built timber ship, 89ft long, filled with a rich collection of grave goods.

Archaeologists believe the ship-burial may have been the grave of Raedwald, a king of the East Angles, who died around 625. Among the items found were a helmet, sword and shield, gold coins, silver and bronze bowls, a great silver dish from Byzantium, and decayed clothing, including a cloak of Near East origin.

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DNA scientists join war against malaria

A century after the discovery of how it spreads, the disease kills 2 million

people a year. Nigel Hawkes reports

A HUNT for a new weapon against malaria has been launched as the disease threatens to get out of control around the world. The £8 million research project is starting a century almost to the day since the British physician Ronald Ross discovered that mosquitoes were the carriers for malaria — a parasite — and passed it on when they bit.

Scientists working for the Wellcome Trust, a British charity, will spend three years working out the full genetic sequence of the parasite, to identify features that may be susceptible to attack by drugs. Malaria kills more than two million people a year, most of them children. It is increasingly resistant to drugs, and poses a threat to tourists from the West who visit malaria-prone regions. The disease has spread back into India, Brazil, Sri Lanka and Turkey, and there have been sporadic cases in many US states.

Dr John Stephenson, of the Wellcome Trust, said: "The rapid and continuing increase of drug-resistant malaria parasites is presenting the possibility that soon there may no longer be any effective treatment." The new project is

based at the Wellcome Trust Genome Campus at Hinxton, near Cambridge.

Genetic information that controls the life cycle of the parasite *Plasmodium falciparum* is stored in the base-pairs which link together to make up the DNA. It is estimated to contain 30 million base-pairs, making it considerably larger than any other organism so far sequenced.

The work is likely to be shared with an American team, but final details have yet to be worked out. Dr Stephenson said: "This important and innovative initiative will accelerate the pace of research into this devastating disease and identify tens of thousands of novel drug and vaccine targets, instead of the few currently available."

Malaria has become resistant to chloroquine, the cheapest and most widely available drug. Resistance has also developed to a more recent drug, mefloquine (Lariam), which many people are reluctant to take because of reported side-effects such as dizziness.

Traditional methods of controlling the disease — including mosquito nets, insecticides and draining the pools where



Ross: he won a Nobel prize for his discovery

the mosquitoes breed — have faltered in many countries.

An international conference next week in Hyderabad, India, will bring together 650 scientists, public health officials and funding agencies. Marking the centenary of Ross's discovery, the aim is to raise awareness and call for concerted action to prevent what the Malaria Foundation calls "a major worldwide public health disaster".

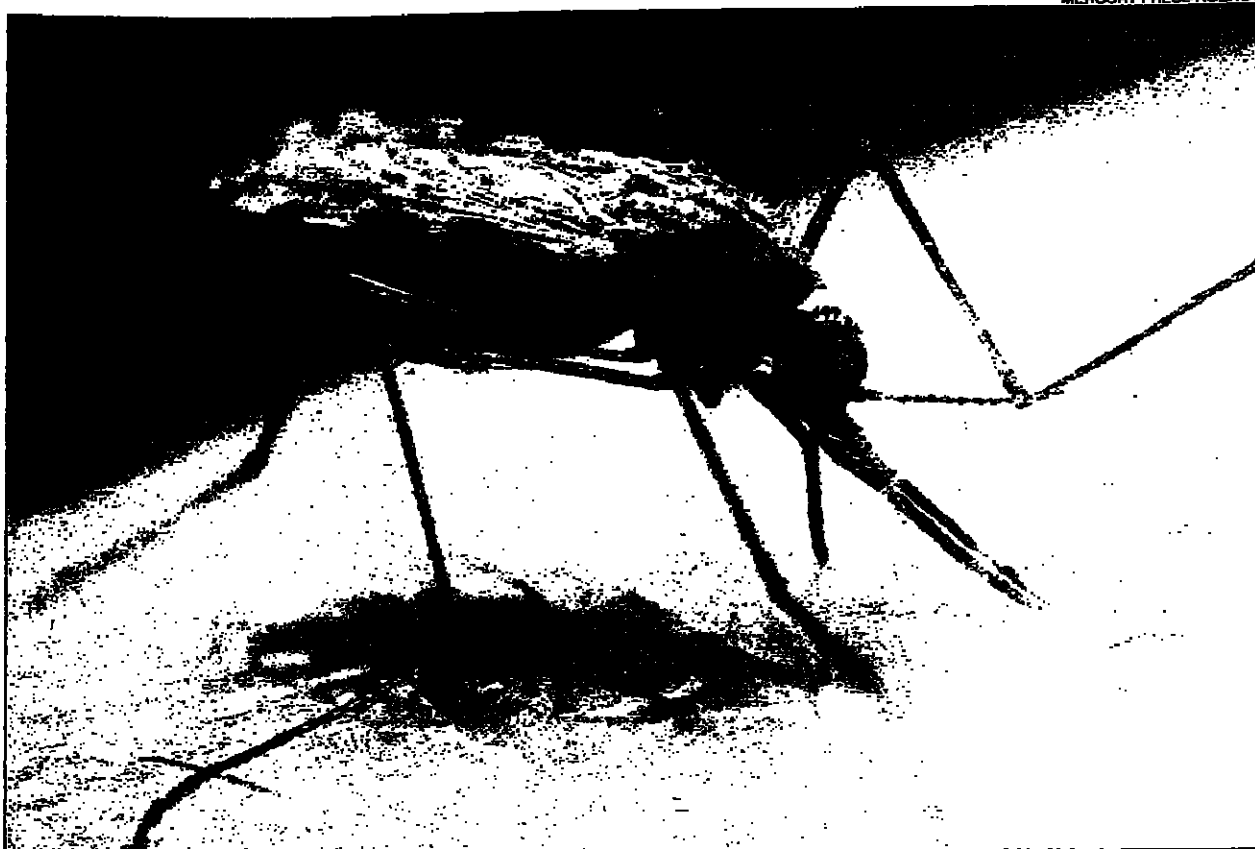
Before 20 August 1897, when Ross worked out how the parasite spread, the popular view had been that it was caused by contaminated air (hence malaria) or through infected water. Others had speculated that the mosquito was responsible; Ross, who worked for the Indian Medical

Service, proved it by dissecting mosquitoes, including one which had just fed on a malaria patient.

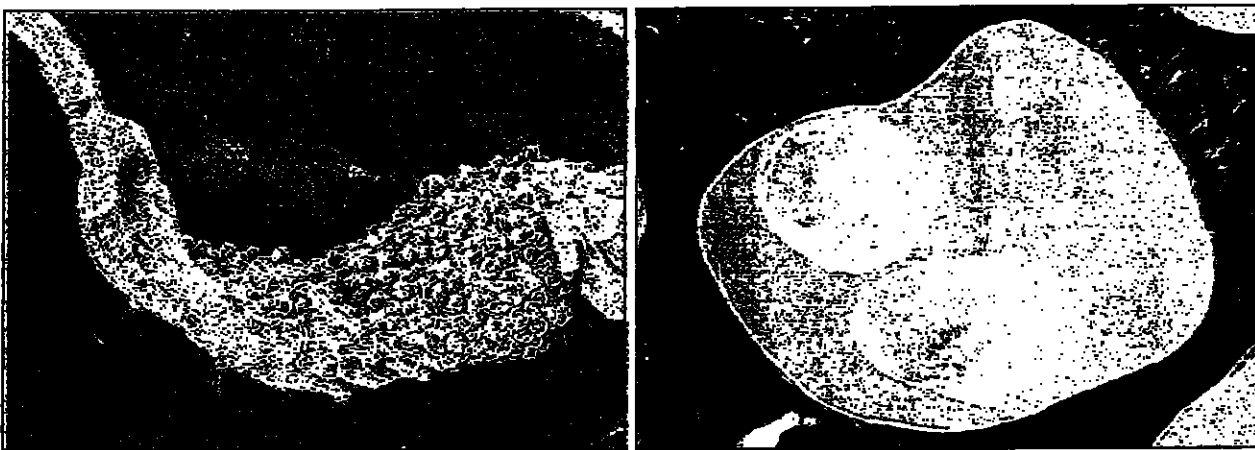
This mosquito yielded the parasites that had already been identified as the cause of the disease. By killing mosquitoes or preventing them from breeding or biting, it was discovered that the disease could be controlled. Ross won the Nobel Prize in 1902, and was knighted in 1911. He died in 1932.

Perhaps the greatest early success from his discovery was in Panama, a graveyard for the French team which had tried and failed to build a canal between the Atlantic and the Pacific. Poor planning, disease and a financial scandal defeated them. Later, the successful American team had the advantage of Ross's work, and the canal was completed in 1914.

Malaria was common in England between the times of Elizabeth I and Victoria; Shakespeare called it the ague. It disappeared between 1860 and 1930. Medical historians have long argued over how this happened, suggesting better housing, easier availability of quinine and the introduction of the turnip in about 1860 as a winter feed for cattle. The turnip enabled many animals to be kept alive through the winter instead of being slaughtered, and mosquitoes preferred to bite cows than human beings.



The inside story: a mosquito feasts on human blood while, along its stomach wall, below left, malaria parasites are shown in blue on an electron-micrograph picture. Right, parasites (blue and pink) attack a red blood cell



Elderly drivers less dangerous than young

RECENTLY, when driving from the Reform Club, I was stopped by the police. Why, they asked, was I driving so slowly? The reply that I was "thinking" was considered inadequate and I was asked to take a breath test. When their meter failed to show a response, they repeated the test and then their initial question.

They were decent officers, doing their duty, and afterwards they patted me on the back and said: "Ah, well, doctor, if you like driving slowly that's your right."

Fortunately, most older motorists travel slowly. Steady driving and the caution born of experience helps to



minimise tragedies such as that in Hampshire on Monday, when a mother died and her baby was injured after a woman aged 84 died at the wheel of her car and crashed into it.

Sudden fatalities are rare. A patient with a coronary thrombosis feels crushing chest pain and nausea, which usually gives time to draw into the side of the road.

Many strokes are heralded by the worst headache that can be imagined and only the most selfish, or brave, would fail to pull into a layby.

Cardiac arrhythmia, some forms of stroke, and seizures can cause immediate paralysis, but fortunately these are rare while an elderly person is driving.

Chronic problems are more likely to create a risk for older

drivers. Failing eyesight and increasing dementia may lead to an accident if a motorist pulls out at a junction without looking properly.

The law says that eyesight is to be tested in good light and does not differentiate between day and night vision. Even at dusk, eyesight begins to fail in older patients and this could make driving unsafe. Oncoming headlights can cause disabling dazzle, particularly if cataracts are developing. Glaucoma shrinks the field of vision so that a pedestrian on the pavement may not be noticed.

Older patients are more likely to nod off if they have

had a sleepless night and attempt to travel too far the next day. Long-distance driving should always include time set aside for a rest or nap on the way.

Once a driver has reached the age of 70 the Driver Vehicle Licensing Agency asks pertinent questions before a licence is renewed. A medical examination is requested if there are doubts. Road deaths are, however, more likely to be caused by a speeding young driver than a sick elderly motorist.

DR THOMAS STUTTAFFORD

X-ray vision helps doctors to reach their diagnosis

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

DOCTORS at Hammersmith Hospital in west London can now consult X-ray images on screen, using an electronic system inaugurated yesterday by Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary.

The system allows doctors to enlarge part of the image for closer study, and to fetch it on monitors in the hospital's wards, clinics, operating theatres and casualty units. Patients should benefit from

receiving lower doses of radiation, and an end to delays caused by not having X-ray film available.

The £13 million Picture Archiving and Communication System is the result of seven years' research. Nuala Martin, manager of imaging at the hospital, said: "This system offers enormous advantages.

There is no risk of images being lost or misfiled, and because of the technology involved the radiation dosage is less than for conventional X-rays. Another advantage, for

doctors and patients, is that the image can be manipulated on screen to enhance or magnify areas. So instead of having to take several X-rays to ensure accurate diagnosis, we need take only one."

She believes that the system is an important step towards worldwide "tele-medicine". "There is no reason why in the future a patient need travel to receive an opinion from a specialist — their images will simply be sent to the consultant's own computer and advice be given by telephone."

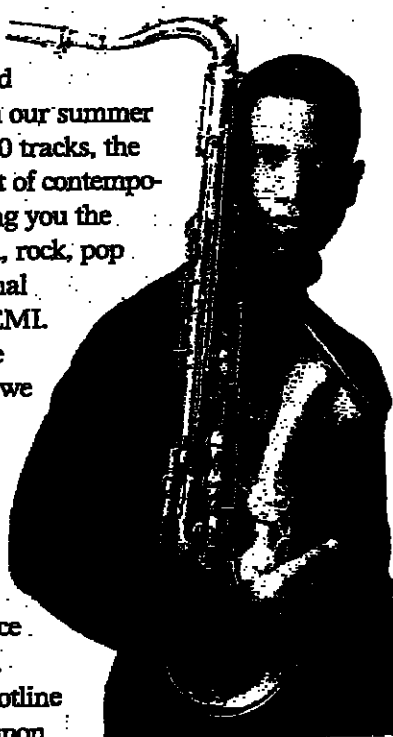
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Every day this week we will be featuring a different title. Today we have Jazz in the 90s which includes Leroy Jones, Henry Threadgill, Joaq Bosco and David Sanchez, right. Each CD costs just £2.99 (inc p&p in the UK). Or, you can get all five CDs in the set for the special price of just £9.99 — a saving of £4.96.

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- (06) Marcus Roberts
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- (07) Antonio Carlos Jobim
So Danco Samba
- (08) Henry Threadgill
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EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

Comedians are left labouring for laughter

REAL life has gone beyond a joke for "alternative" comedians. For years, they had never had it so good. Now they are lamenting the passing of the Conservatives.

Comics at the Edinburgh Festival yesterday expressed regret that a wealth of targets for left-wing mockery had been changed by the arrival of Labour. The problem has been partly blamed for a fall in the number of stand-ups on the fringe, from 200 last year to about 140.

"It's messed up my act," Boothby Graffoe grumbled to his audience on Monday night. "I used to be able to say: 'The Government — what bastards!' and get a laugh. Now, it's: 'The Government — hurrah! Let's work with them!' Not quite the same, he said, getting a laugh."

Off stage, he described the Tory downfall as a tragic loss to comedy: "Labour are doing the things we've wanted them to do all this time."

Junior Simpson, a young comedian hailed as the new Lenny Henry, said that the morning after celebrating the election result he woke up to a hangover and the realisation that he had paged of material to rip up: "The rise of what they used to call alternative comedy and the Tory Government go hand in hand. Now, after the 18 years — and a lot of people's material was based along that — they may have to turn the page and move on."

One of his gags was prompted by Tony Blair revealing that he smacks his children. Simpson impersonated John Major confiding: "I never slap my kids. My kids slap me."

Nica Burns, director of the Perrier Award, Britain's most prestigious comedy prize, said that most comics were Labour voters: "Even if Tony Blair blows it, it's going to be very hard to knock them. He's PC. Comedy is about subversion and fighting against something. The more hated

Dalya Alberge reports on how the political satirists are already missing their Tory targets

the Government, the more material there is for performers. Thatcher provided a lot of comedians with a lot of material. For that reason only, they were sad to see her go. John Major was just glasses and a grey suit. Tony is handsome, charming and clever. Well, that's just not funny!"

A new award at the festival has been launched by London Weekend Television's comedy unit and its controller of comedy, Humphrey Barclay. Yesterday he spoke of the need to rejuvenate comedy. Sensing a need for more

political work, he is producing a topical comment show, *Stuff The Week*. The winner of the LWT Writing Award will receive a £1,000 cheque and a commission to develop a script for television.

Mr Barclay said that comedians were wondering what was left to be angry about. "I remember John Cleese saying that satire can only exist under a right-wing government. He may be right." Mr Barclay's team has been debating whether there is satire to be done under a Labour Government. "It demands more original thought."

Other comics felt that Labour was simply too dull. Donna McPhail, who is appearing at the Gilded Balloon theatre, said: "They don't seem to have a sense of humour. I'm on the verge of thinking they're too boring. Let's get the Tories back."

However, her hopes were raised by Robin Cook's infidelity. Her latest routine also touches on Cherie Blair, the Prime Minister's wife. "She's a bit of a slapper, opening her front door. But I liked her nylon nightie and the maccara coming down her face. I used to say Norma doesn't go to bed, they hang her up in a closet."

Marcus Brigstocke, winner of the 1996 BBC New Comedy award, felt that some comedians would be uneasy knocking Labour, while others, such as himself, felt that Labour policies were so close to the Tories' that nothing had changed.

Some of the more radical left-wing comedians had no hesitation in attacking a Labour Government. Mark Thomas, who will be appearing at Edinburgh Queen's Hall, said: "Mark Twain once said that the last person you want in the White House is someone who wants to be there. That's the attitude people should take."

Arts, page 31



A Major loss: Junior Simpson used to mock the last Prime Minister. Now he has ripped up pages of jokes

Jokes will be on Mandelson

By MARK HENDERSON

VETERANS of political satire were certain yesterday that the Government's comedy honeymoon would soon be over. Barry Took, who took aim at politicians in *That Was The Week That Was* in the 1960s, said comedians would go for whichever party was in power.

"There has been political satire and jokes as long as there has been writing. On *TW3* we took the piss out of Harold Wilson every bit as much as we did Macmillan and Douglas-Home," Took said yesterday.

New Labour had not yet done enough in government to allow comedians to find a theme, he said. "There are plenty of characters to go for, but they are still fresh, and also very shrewd. Cook and Mandelson look like good targets, but are too bright to be got. Saying Mandelson's up to something sinister is



Barry Took, left, has already picked his targets, but David Baddiel feels a new approach is needed



like saying that chap Machiavelli is causing trouble in Italy."

Michael Palin, who poked fun in *Monty Python*, said: "Satire should be oblivious of whatever party is in power and should seek to knock the absurdities of life. It should go beyond politics."

He said that the Conservatives had particularly excelled at making "fools of themselves", but added that there was plenty of time for Labour to match them.

Ned Sherrin, another *TW3* veteran, said: "Labour should enjoy the joll as they will have years of soaping. It will be like Wilson's Government, loving *TW3* in Opposition but hating it in power. Harman and Dobson have all the comic potential of a George Brown. Peter Mandelson will be funny when he comes out of his coffin at night."

David Baddiel, a younger member of the comedy establishment, felt that political comedy had been on the wane for years. "I have always made a conscious decision not to do it, as everyone was doing it when I started," he said.

Baddiel, who interviewed Tony Blair for *The Enormous Turnip*, a television show that sought to introduce politics to a younger audience, added: "The sort of gags I do about politicians are not political: more situational or observational. There is no message like you used to get with Ben Elton."

"People can also be topical without being political. You can joke about Dodi and Di or Oasis and still be satirical."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Brockett tryst inquiry

The Prison Service is investigating claims that Lord Bockett, who is serving five years for a £45 million vintage car fraud, spent an hour in bed with a woman during a fake medical appointment. Ford open prison in West Sussex is checking an appointment made by Bockett with a physiotherapist. A prison officer took him to a house ten miles from the prison and watched as Bockett was ushered inside by an attractive young woman. The curtains were drawn and Bockett spent an hour inside. The officer reported the incident to the governor.

Pilot named

The two men who died in a helicopter crash near the M6 in Lancashire were named as Peter Thorn, the pilot of Weybridge, Surrey, and Peter Huxley, 38, of Epworth, Yorkshire. They were carrying out gas pipeline checks.

Sky-jumper hurt

A parachutist was taken to hospital after leaping 400ft from a 41-storey building in the Barbican, London. The man, who injured his leg, was among a group of five jumpers. The others landed safely and ran off.

999 call hoaxer

A 16-year-old who made hoax 999 calls was given 100 hours' community service and had his radio equipment confiscated. The teenager from Leeds admitted at a youth court in Bradford to breaches of the Wireless Telegraphy Act.

Wife due home

The wife of the British pastor killed by bandits in Hungary is to return home this week after recovering from treatment. Jo Pollard, 55, had her jaw and nose broken in the attack which left her husband Michael, 62, dead.

Rescue flashback

The yachtsman Tony Bullimore, who survived for four days after capsizing in the Southern Ocean in January, is to recreate his ordeal in Tasmania for a documentary. A replica of his upturned yacht will be built in a pool.

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The Queen and Disraeli, who said that with royalty, flattery should be "laid on with a trowel"

Rivals who were the chalk and cheese of politics

Politics was essentially a spectator sport in Victorian times, and that was true in more senses than one. It was not just a question of the vast crowds that would turn out to hear political speeches: W.E. Gladstone spoke to an audience of at least 25,000 in Bingley Hall, Birmingham, in 1877. (Many Premiership football clubs would count themselves lucky to have that number of people on their terraces today.)

Yet, at the same time, going to see and hear great men was the limit of participation allowed to most citizens. The Great Reform Bill of 1832 had increased the electorate merely from 435,000 to 652,000. Although Disraeli's Second Reform Bill of 1867 raised the total number of voters to nearly two million, it was left for Gladstone with his Third Reform Bill of 1884 not merely to increase the electorate (all of course, men) to nearly four million, but also to extend the franchise to the inhabitants of the countryside. (Country folk, presumably, had not been beneficiaries of the previous two Reform Bills.)

Party alignments in those days were also a much more fluid business. When Victoria came to the throne in 1837, her first Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, may have been nominally a Whig, but by temperament and instinct he was a Tory.

Melbourne had been totally unenthusiastic about Lord John Russell's Reform Bill of 1832, and he was never reconciled to Sir Robert Peel's repeal of the Corn Laws in 1845 — the measure that prompted Benjamin Disraeli to remark that a Tory Prime Minister had "caught the Whigs bathing and walked off with their clothes".

That kind of thing was not to happen in British politics

Anthony Howard compares the talents of Gladstone and Disraeli, the party leaders who dominated a century in which the number of British citizens entitled to vote increased slowly but inexorably

again until the advent of Blairism and new Labour. However, if they were not partisan, Victorian politics were still very much personality-dominated. If only in longevity, Gladstone bestrides the era like no one else: he was first elected to Parliament in 1832 and was still an MP, and indeed Prime Minister, at the age of 84 in 1894.

Gladstone's only rival, Disraeli, though he certainly illuminated the political firmament, dazzled for a much briefer period. The two of them, of course, had once been members of the same political party. That was back at the dawn of Gladstone's career when Lord Macaulay famously referred to him in the *Edinburgh Review* of 1839 as "the rising hope of those stern and unbending Tories".

Disraeli, to be fair to him, was never one of those. Indeed, from the moment in the 1840s that he risked a flat lie about never having asked Peel for a job, he was always one of the great chancers of politics — the quality that, no doubt, makes him the "favourite Tory" of left-wing politicians such as Michael Foot.

How such "an adventurer, pure and simple" (to borrow Foot's words again) became the venerated icon of modern progressive Toryism must remain one of the many impenetrable mysteries attached

to such ancestor worship. For Disraeli was, of course, first and foremost an imperialist, the man who did not merely purchase the Suez Canal for Queen Victoria ("You have it, Ma'am, it is yours") but also had her created Empress of India (not that she ever went there, preferring to have rather questionable Indian retain-

In her political attitudes, Victoria always spoke for the women of the country

ers summoned to her service in London).

To give the old charlatan his due, there were never any lies on him. It was he, after all, who once cynically observed: "Everyone likes flattery and when you come to royalty you should lay it on with a trowel." (Which is roughly what he did,

NEXT: Nursing with Nightingale, and the engineer who built London's sewers. How the Victorians invented cleanliness and revolutionised public health



Debt-ridden Disraeli was showered with royal gifts

What does a Queen give her favourite Prime Minister as a token of her esteem? Benjamin Disraeli picked up an earldom, but he also acquired a houseful of pictures and superior knick-knacks showered on him by a monarch who believed that none of her ministers had shown her more consideration and kindness.

There is a statuette of John Brown with a pony and dog, and another of him without. She gave "Dizzy" a portrait of herself to hang in his dining room, and his bedroom walls are covered with portraits of the Queen, Albert and their enormous extended family. Some men are given carriage clocks when they retire: the Queen gave Disraeli a weighty bronze of herself seated at a spinning wheel.

Although the first One Nation Tory, Disraeli harboured romantic notions of an England still governed by its old landowning class and he determined to become a country squire himself. Already a successful novelist, unwise dabbling in South American mining shares had nonetheless plunged him into a lifetime of debt. However, marriage to a rich widow enabled him to buy the manor house at Hughenden, nestled in a Chiltern valley above High Wycombe.

Unlike Gladstone, who enjoyed chopping down trees, Disraeli preferred to plant them. The grounds of Hughenden exhibit the fruits of his devotion to forestry, although many of the original

Kindness to his Queen reaped rich rewards, writes Alan Hamilton



Disraeli's dining room, with Victoria's portrait

trees have been replaced. It is still a particularly pleasant place.

Born Jewish but baptised an Anglican at 15, Disraeli entered the House of Commons in 1837, when Jews were banned from Westminster. He had an immense confidence in his talents even before he entered politics. In his diary for 1833, displayed in the House, he wrote: "My mind is a continental mind. It is a revolution-

ary mind. I am only truly great in action. If ever I am placed in a truly eminent position, I shall prove this. I could rule the House of Commons, although there would be a great prejudice against me at first. It is the most jealous assembly in the world."

As a novelist, he despised most contemporary fiction, except, of course, his own. "If I want to read a novel, I write

one," he remarked. He sent Victoria a complete set of his works; she responded with an elaborately bound volume of Goethe.

In a bedroom at Hughenden are displayed his formal robes as Chancellor of the Exchequer, which by rights he should have handed to his successor. But he was determined that Gladstone should not have them, forcing the great man to have a set of his own made — a set still available for Gordon Brown's use should he overcome his distaste for formal dress.

On Disraeli's death in 1881, Victoria came to Hughenden and sat alone in his study. He declined burial at Westminster Abbey, preferring the country church at the end of his drive. Inside, there is a memorial to him erected by Victoria, with a text from the Book of Proverbs: "Kings love him that speaketh right." **□ Hughenden Manor, Buckinghamshire (National Trust), 1½ miles N of High Wycombe, on A4128 to Great Missenden. Open Wed-Sun, afternoons only (grounds from midday). Adults £3.80, children £1.90**

Country retreat bursting with history's junk

Country houses open to the public can sometimes be sterile places. But not Fasque, the Scottish family seat of the Gladstones in the deep hinterland between Dundee and Aberdeen, where the great man spent much of his childhood and to which he regularly retreated in his older years. Fasque is not only still lived in by Gladstone's great-grandson; it is a gloriously disorganised clutter.

The Gladstone family appear to have been incapable of throwing anything away. Gladstone bags, jammed and rusted shut but still tantalisingly full of goodness knows what, litter the hall. The dairy overflows with a collection of old milk bottles, all different. Ancient carpet sweepers and brass candlesticks lurk in dark corners of the servants' quarters. On a shelf is an elderly megaphone for bellowing instructions at grouse beaters.

As I poked about below stairs, among enormous cane salmon rods with brass reels, gun cases, walking sticks, and a cane device for drying waders, the curator produced a large brown paper parcel tied with string he had found behind a chair only the day before. Its label declared it to be a consignment of paper shooting targets, and it was plastered with "urgent" stickers. It was still waiting to be opened: the postmark showed it had been dispatched from London in 1922. Fasque is the perfect illustration of

The Gladstone family were great hoarders. Alan Hamilton picks over the clutter

Gladstone's eminently Victorian roots. His father, John, made a fortune as a corn merchant in Liverpool, feeding the industrial masses in the Lancashire cotton mills. John Gladstone bought Fasque and its estate in 1829, and it remains largely unchanged from its late-Victorian heyday as the upstairs-downstairs seat of self-made men.

Upstairs is reached by a fine double-cantilever staircase, leading to the light, airy library where William spent many a peaceful hour immersed in Homer. Among the thousands of books is the Gladstone family Bible, with the dynasty's births, marriages and deaths recorded in copperplate on the flyleaf. When I went in, it was lying casually on the floor, and I nearly fell over it. Above the fireplace is a portrait of George Canning, the liberal Tory Prime Minister who was a major influence on William's decision to leave the Tory Party at the time of Corn Law repeal. A side room is devoted to Gladstone



Fasque, the Gladstones' family home at Fettercairn, Aberdeenshire

memorabilia including letters, photographs, ornate gifts from grateful town councils and silver spades with which he cut first sods. Fasque hopes to add Gladstone's battered old red budget box, now that Gordon Brown has replaced it with a smart new number made by apprentices in his Fife constituency.

But it is downstairs that truly reeks of another age. The servants' dining hall is set out as a schoolroom for estate children, equipped with a prehistoric electric radiator and an ancient glass device for demonstrating electricity. In the corridors are first-generation brass telephones and speaking tubes for communication between butler and master, and dusty boxes of Balmoral Sperm — a Victorian brand of candle.

Fasque employed up to 15 domestic staff, and a good number of those would have spent backbreaking Mon-

days in the laundry. Most of the machinery still exists: clothes boilers, mangles, a complex chain-and-belt driven machine for pressing sheets, and a stove for keeping 50 flatirons hot at once.

Gladstone loved this house, and wished he had inherited it rather than his wife's Welsh pile at Hawarden in Flintshire. But Fasque went to his elder brother, Thomas.

Such is the clutter that the family have called in Bonhams to hold an auction of superfluous lumber on September 27. If you cannot make the sale, go soon to the house, before anyone has the bright idea of tidying it up. **Fasque House, Aberdeenshire, is on the B974 Brechin to Banchory road, half a mile north of Fettercairn. Open daily until September 30, 11-5.30. Adults £3.50, children £1, concessions £2.50. Guided tours on request**

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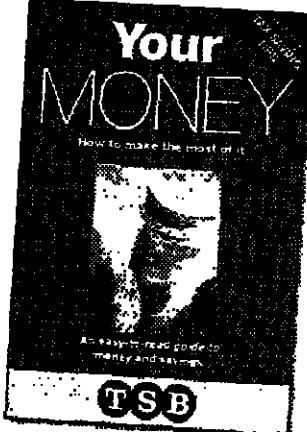
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How Elvis tried to aid Nixon in drugs crusade

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

THE most bizarre White House encounter of modern times — when Elvis Presley met Richard Nixon — was commemorated by the US Administration yesterday.

Adding to the considerable hype marking the twentieth anniversary of Presley's death next Saturday, the National Archives released copious details and photographs on the Internet from official records of the meeting.

Discarding its usual stodgy image, the National Archives' Presley site recounts how, on the morning of December 21, 1970, he arrived unannounced at the White House to deliver a rambling five-page letter to Nixon written on American Airlines stationery.

The rock and roll pioneer wanted to give Nixon a chrome-plated Colt .45, "a real collector's gun", and to obtain for himself the credentials of a federal agent in the war on

drugs. Presley offered to serve privately against what he considered to be threats to America. He wrote: "The drug culture, the hippie elements, the Students for a Democratic Society, Black Panthers etc. do NOT consider me as their enemy or as they call it The Establishment. I call it America and I love it. Sir, I can and will be of any service that I can to help The Country out."

Bud Krogh, a Nixon aide, thought the letter was a hoax until a call to Presley's hotel established that he was indeed in Washington. The meeting was approved, even though H.R. Haldeman, Nixon's humourless chief of staff, wrote on the memo "You must be kidding".

Presley was resplendent in purple velvet cape, tight-fitting matching trousers, a high-collared white shirt open to his chest, a gold medallion around his neck and a gold

belt buckle as wide as a tyre. Nixon, rising from his desk, said: "It's very good to meet you, Mr. Presley. I appreciate your offer to help us on the drug problem." Despite his abuse of prescription drugs that led to his death in 1977, Presley did denounce street drugs at every opportunity.

The meeting was about four months before Nixon bugged the Oval Office and is not preserved on tape. Presley offered his opinion that the Beatles "had been a real force for anti-American spirit".

He showed Nixon badges he had collected from various police forces and photos of his family. He did not mention that two days before he had stormed out of Graceland, his Memphis mansion, in a row with his wife, Priscilla, and his father over his buying six Mercedes-Benz cars and \$38,000 (\$23,000) worth of guns as Christmas presents.

"It's my money," he shouted as, for the first time, he left home alone and boarded a commercial flight to Washington. Two bodyguards joined him later.

Nixon said Presley could reach young people as no one in government could. As a paranoid himself, Nixon may have recognised similar symptoms in Presley. He reiterated three times that it was crucial



A resplendent Elvis Presley meets President Nixon at the White House in 1970. The President said: "It's very good to meet you, Mr. Presley. I appreciate your offer to help us on the drug problem"

for Presley to maintain his credibility.

They agreed to keep their meeting secret and, incredibly, no word of it leaked out for 13 months. Nixon consented to Presley having a badge as an honorary agent of the federal Narcotics Bureau.

Presley was so ecstatic that he hugged the President, a gesture that evidently caught Nixon off guard. He responded awkwardly with a pat on the shoulder.

Mr Krogh, now a Seattle lawyer, says: "The meeting was one of the most improbable things that ever happened in the White House. The odds are a million to one that anybody could drive up, hand in a letter to the President and have a meeting three hours later."

Jerry Schilling, one of the bodyguards and now a film producer, said: "You could see there was a meeting of minds between these two guys who

were both at the top of their profession. The top is pretty lonely, no matter what profession you're in."

As for the Colt .45, it was checked over first by the Secret Service and now has pride of place at the Nixon Library and birthplace in Yorba Linda, California.

The meeting can be found at: <http://www.sara.gov/cmh/exhibits.html> □ Carter concern: Jimmy Carter, the former President,

was reported yesterday to wonder if he could have saved Elvis Presley who phoned him while "totally stoned" weeks before his death.

Presley did not know what he was saying and his sentences were almost incoherent. Mr Carter told *The New Yorker* magazine. He said he had patiently tried to ease Presley out of his paranoid delusions, calming his fears that he was being "shadowed" by sinister forces.

Kennedy clan lose leading supporter

BY TUNKU VARADARAJAN

ONE of the most consistent supporters of the Kennedys, *The New York Times*, appears at last to have turned against its favourite clan.

In a hard-hitting editorial published yesterday, entitled "Naked Kennedy Truth", the newspaper described John F. Kennedy Jr., the son of President Kennedy, as "vapid", attacking him for a piece he wrote this week for his own magazine, *George*, in which he described two of his cousins as "poster boys for bad behaviour".

"John Kennedy's little essay", the newspaper said, is a "sign of the end of the Kennedys as an entitled political class".

The editorial continues: "Members of the third generation, like Representative Joseph Kennedy (the son of the late Robert Kennedy) in his faltering bid for the Massachusetts governorship, will have to be judged on the content of what they write and say, rather than as packages of money and genes."

The tone of the editorial would appear to suggest a pronounced departure from *The New York Times*'s customary pro-Kennedy stance, which it has maintained unwaveringly through a succession of recent peccadilloes, rape charges and messy divorces.

Insiders suggest that Mr Kennedy's latest offering in *George*, which the editorial calls "sophomoric", has proved the last straw for Howell Raines, the editor of the editorial page.

A thundering Southern moralist, he is believed to have been deeply offended by Mr Kennedy's description of his cousin Michael's alleged sexual relationship with an underage babysitter as a "hedge against morality".

"John Kennedy should learn to call sleeping with the babysitter sleeping with the babysitter," the editorial declares.

A newspaper source said: "The *New York Times* has always had a higher idea of the Kennedys than the Kennedys have had about themselves. It was all bound to unravel one day."

Brits add touch of evil to Hollywood cast of villains

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

AS POLITICAL correctness and a certain *fin de siècle* embarrassment drive Hollywood to pension off such staple baddies as Arab terrorists, wily Orientals and Latino drug lords, one "ethnic group" — the British — remains untouched by changing trends.

For all the new-fangled racial sensitivity that has swept Tinseltown in recent years, it is still permissible to cast the Brits as evil.

Indeed, some would say that it is positively encouraged.

As the cry goes up for "ethnically neutral" villains, Hollywood is also resorting increasingly to Communist bad guys. *Air Force One*, this week's box-office success, features crazed Communist missile-slingers who are determined to restore Russia to its full Brezhnevite glory. The film is a reassuring return to older certitudes, when America equalled "good" and Communists equalled "bad".

A forthcoming film, *The Red*

Corner, features titanic tussles between the good old boys from America and Chinese Communists bent on killing off the capitalist monster. As with *Air Force One*, the villains' ethnicity — Chinese or Russian — is submerged in a sea of "ideology". Evil doctrine erases Slavic features, Russian accents, narrow eyes, and an inability to pronounce the letter "r".

Yet the British have withstood even this onslaught, featuring in a number of recent films as the devil incarnate. From *The Silence of the*

Lambs and *The Lion King*, to *Star Wars*, *Braveheart* and *Michael Collins*, the British, or their accent, are employed to portray fiendishness, villainy and cruelty.

Hannibal Lecter, played by Sir Anthony Hopkins, was the textbook Brit from Hollywood central casting, Machiavellian, snobbish, toffee-voiced and totally amoral, although playing an American he nourished a stereotype of Britons that America has cherished ever since it fought to free itself from the Empire. And if one feature forms

the basis of the image, it is the accent: it oozes, to American ears, a malice unrivalled by other races.

There are other stereotypes, of course, that turn on the accent. The same manner of speech that can make an audience break out in boos — consider Scar, the *Lion King*'s evil uncle, to whom Jeremy Irons lent his cut-glass voice — can, at a Manhattan soirée, cause a hostess to flush with pleasure. "O, I love your accent," is a phrase that British hear almost daily in America, and never really tire of hearing.

From cabbies to dentists, from cashiers to the woman beside one at a dinner party, a well-bred British accent works wonders in America, melting all resistance. Yet take that voice to the screen, and it provokes fear, sending shivers down the spine of audiences.

The British, however, take this in their stride. As long as Hollywood needs villains, it will need Britons. No one, neither the audiences, nor the actors, is complaining.

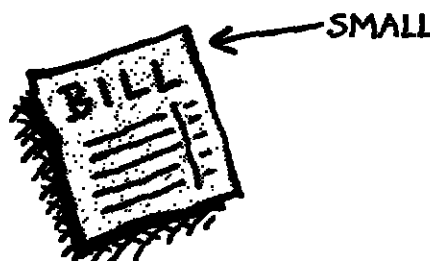
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Klinghoffer family ends PLO suit

BY TUNKU VARADARAJAN

THE family of Leon Klinghoffer, the disabled New Yorker who was shot in his wheelchair and pushed overboard from the cruise ship *Achille Lauro* 12 years ago by Palestinian gunmen, have agreed to drop their lawsuit against the Palestine Liberation Organisation in return for a substantial monetary settlement.

The sum, which has not been disclosed, is believed to amount to tens of millions of dollars. The PLO also settled its litigation with Crown Travel, the New Jersey travel company which organised the ill-starred Mediterranean cruise for Mr Klinghoffer and his wife, Marilyn, in 1985, taken to celebrate their 30th wedding anniversary.

However, Nasser al-Kidwa, the PLO's permanent observer at the United Nations, insisted that the settlement was not an admission of wrongdoing. He said: "We have always said that the PLO had nothing to do with this tragic event and we maintain, of course, that position."

The PLO has always argued that the attack on the *Achille Lauro* on October 8, 1985, was the work of a renegade group acting without the knowledge or support of the organisation's high command.

Arafat to meet demands for crackdown on terror

FROM ROSS DUNN IN JERUSALEM

ISRAEL and the Palestinian Authority appeared last night to be nearing a compromise as Israeli television reported that Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, had agreed to clamp down on Islamic militants.

This followed assurances from Dennis Ross, the US Special Envoy, that he would address Palestinian complaints against Israel.

Continuing his shuttle diplomacy, Mr Ross said that Israel and the Palestinians would resume security co-operation, which was suspended in March following the decision to build a new Jewish neighbourhood in east Jerusalem.

"I think we have a start at this point on the security relationship and we will look for the concrete results and we will be watching," he said.

Despite these developments, Palestinian leaders criticised Mr Ross's emphasis on security. Saeb Erekat, the Palestinian chief negotiator, said: "It is premature to jump to conclusions about the results of Mr Ross's mission. But we hope that all of us will be able to put the peace process back on track."

Mr Erekat's remarks underline the fact that Mr Ross has only been laying the groundwork for a trip later this

month by Madeline Albright, the US Secretary of State. But before her visit, Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, is insisting that the Palestinian Authority takes serious action to fight terrorism. His security chiefs have provided the Palestinian Authority with a list of suspected terrorists and demanded their arrest.

"We are trying to verify that Yasser Arafat, fulfils the commitments he gave Israel to fight terrorism, crack down on the terrorist infrastructure, arrest the leaders, collect their guns and dismantle bomb factories," Mr Netanyahu



Ross: has made a start on security issues

said. Today the Israeli leader will travel to Amman for talks with Jordan's King Hussein as efforts to jump-start the peace talks continue.

But while the discussions in the political backrooms may be showing progress, the scenes in the streets yesterday were anything but encouraging. The Palestinian Authority joined Hamas in organising a joint demonstration in the West Bank town of Nablus to protest at the Israeli closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Thousands of Palestinians threw stones, burned Israeli and American flags and an effigy of Mr Netanyahu.

Israel has eased some of the restrictions on Palestinians, allowing truckloads of food into the territories and agricultural exports into the Jewish State. Mr Ross had criticised Israel for some of the security measures against the Palestinians which he said were counterproductive.

□ Nablus: Three officers from Yasser Arafat's elite Force 17 bodyguards were convicted of treason for spying for Israel. Fawzi Sawalha, 23, described as the ringleader, was sentenced to death. Khalid Athamneh, 24, was sentenced to life in prison, and Taber Jamiljan, 22, to 15 years. (AP)

New move to break Lockerbie stalemate

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE Foreign Office confirmed yesterday that the Government is to look again at ways of breaking the stalemate over the demand for the extradition from Libya of the two men accused of the Lockerbie bombing.

The move comes after a visit to Tripoli last week by two British politicians and the father of one of the victims. In two days of talks with senior Libyan ministers they were told that Colonel Gaddafi was ready to consider changes in his offer to send the two accused for trial in a third country, rather than America or Scotland as the West has insisted.

Lord Steel, former Liberal Democrat leader, Sir Cyril Townsend, former chairman of the Conservative parliamentary foreign affairs committee, and Dr Jim Swire, representing the victims of the

bombing, met Muhammad Swai, the Justice Minister, and Abdul Ati al-Obidi, a deputy foreign minister. They later briefed the Foreign Office and called the secret visit useful, but would not divulge details of the Libyan proposals.

The Foreign Office played down suggestions that the Government was softening its stance. A spokesman insisted that, after examining the documents, the Lord Advocate still believed there was strong evidence against Abdul Basset Ali al-Megrahi and Al-Amin Khalifa Fhimah, the suspects who have been kept under house arrest in Tripoli since November 1991.

The Foreign Office denied a suggestion by Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP who has long campaigned for a fresh approach to Libya, that Tony Blair was

"uneasy" with the case against Libya. It said Mr Blair was uneasy with an impasse that has lasted more than eight years.

Britain has repeatedly rejected a trial in a third country, even using Scottish or UN sanctions against Libya. The limited new last month, and Tony Lloyd, a junior Foreign Office Minister, told the families of victims that there was "no change of policy". But the Government is keeping a close watch on claims by an Iranian, convicted in Germany of killing a Kurdish dissident in Berlin, that the bombing of the Pan American plane that killed 270 people. "We are in touch with Bonn and are keeping an open mind," a spokesman said.

Leading men at the White House

In recent years
Tinseltown has
become obsessed
with goings on
in Washington.

FROM GILES WHITFIELD
IN LOS ANGELES

PRESIDENT Clinton's choice of Tom Hanks as his ideal actor to portray him in a film will come as no surprise to followers of the White House genre. Hanks is the James Stewart of his day — decent, honest and entirely admirable — and the President, an avid film fan, is acutely aware of Hollywood's power to shape public opinion.

"I know [Hanks] and respect him as a person and an actor," the President said in an interview with CBS yesterday. Yet in recent years Hollywood has become as obsessed with the White House as its current occupant is with Hollywood.

The trappings of power, from jumbo jets to nuclear weapons codes, have proved irresistible to a generation of film-makers freed by Watergate from an unwritten rule that once protected the presidency from cinematic parody. The result has been a series of performances that either upstage Mr Clinton, as in Bill Pullman's defence of the planet in *Independence Day*, or leave his office even more tarnished than in real life.

Hanks won the hearts of filmgoers and Oscar voters in *Philadelphia*, *Forrest Gump* and as commander of the ill-fated Apollo 13. "I would want somebody with a lot of range and human feeling," the President explained. Yet the latest celluloid President is known less for his range than for the kind of shoot-from-the-hip heroics Mr Clinton has seldom tried. Harrison Ford, in *Air Force One*, starts by discarding his notes for a speech in Moscow and vowing never to let "political" self-interest get in the way of what we know to be morally right.

Ford then singlehandedly overthrows a band of hackers aboard the presidential jet. For this he has been dubbed the "kick-ass President", and if reviews and the box office are any guide (£60 million in 16 days), he would be elected if a



Tom Hanks, left, Bill Clinton's favourite to portray him on film, posing with James Lovell, the former Apollo 13 astronaut. Other celluloid presidents: Harrison Ford, top right, as "the kick-ass" hit of *Air Force One*; Kevin Kline with Sigourney Weaver in *Dave*; and Bill Pullman, world saviour in *Independence Day*

heartbeat were he to run for office.

"Get off my plane!" — Ford's best line — is more inspiring, *Newsweek* says, than Mr Clinton's "I didn't inhale". Meanwhile, as *Entertainment Weekly* gushed, the "butt-kicking executive decisions in *Air Force One* will make you stand up and cheer for democracy."

Hollywood's tradition of fantasy presidents began with *Being There* in 1979, an inglorious time in the history of the Oval Office. After the disgrace of Watergate and the mediocrity of President Ford and the early Carter years, Peter Sellers offered the alternative of an idiot savant in the White House, propelled there by his

simple wisdom acquired as a gardener.

Kevin Kline echoed Sellers' performance with *Dave* in 1994, playing an amateur presidential impersonator, finds that common sense and some straight talking enable him to conjure social justice from corrupt chaos.

In *The American President* (1995), Michael Douglas made ardour permissible in a President, as long as he was popular and widowed. The film, about the perils of presidential dating, offered a wry contrast to Washington gossip about Mr Clinton's alleged infidelities.

The recent *Absolute Power* started Gene Hackman as a chief executive drunk on lust.

He kills a lover by mistake during an episode of rough sex, and would have got away with it but for the inside knowledge of a cat burglar played by Clint Eastwood.

Oliver Stone's *Nixon*, made in 1995, came closer to the raw nerve-endings of the American political establishment. The film, in which Sir Anthony Hopkins played the villain of Watergate as a foul-mouthed and manipulative drunkard, was "paranoid and completely dishonest", the *National Review* railed.

Mr Clinton had no reason to take *Nixon* personally. The same cannot be said of *Primary Colors* now being produced from Joe Klein's bestselling novel based closely on the 1992

White House campaign by the then Governor of Arkansas. The book depicts Jack Stanton (a thinly-disguised Clinton) as a habitual and remorseless philanderer. In the film, Stanton is being played by John Travolta, who in recent stills from the set bears an uncanny likeness to the President.

Beyond the fringes of credibility, Jack Nicholson played a crazed President under attack from outer space in last year's *Mars Attacks*. It remains to be seen whether viewers will have to suspend disbelief in *Wag the Dog*, a forthcoming thriller starring Dustin Hoffman and Robert De Niro as handlers of a President in trouble over rumours that he molested a girl scout.



WORLD SUMMARY

Marriages 'give birth to misery'

New York: Married couples are at their unhappiest when they have children, according to an American sociologist (writes Tunku Varadarajan).

Mary Benin, a researcher at Arizona State University, says children bring parents little more than misery, gloom and depression. In a paper to be presented this week to the American Sociological Association, she reports on a study of 6,785 spouses. She says happiness invariably hits rock bottom when a child is in its teens. Couples do not recover until the children leave home.

Andes rescue bid

Rio de Janeiro: Rescue workers battled to get aid to at least 600 people who faced a fifth day trapped in vehicles in a snow-blocked mountain pass in the Peruvian Andes.

Fugitive held

Berlin: Torsten Reineck, fugitive owner of a houseboat in Miami Beach where Gianni Versace's alleged killer was found dead, has been held here on tax charges. (Reuters)

Jail house rock

Tegucigalpa: About 700 inmates, the entire population of two prisons — at Trujillo and Santa Barbara in northern Honduras — escaped using picks and iron bars. (AP)

Family lashed

Tehran: The brother, sister and sister-in-law of a man sentenced to die today for murdering 11 women, are to receive 70 lashes each for not reporting his crimes. (AFP)

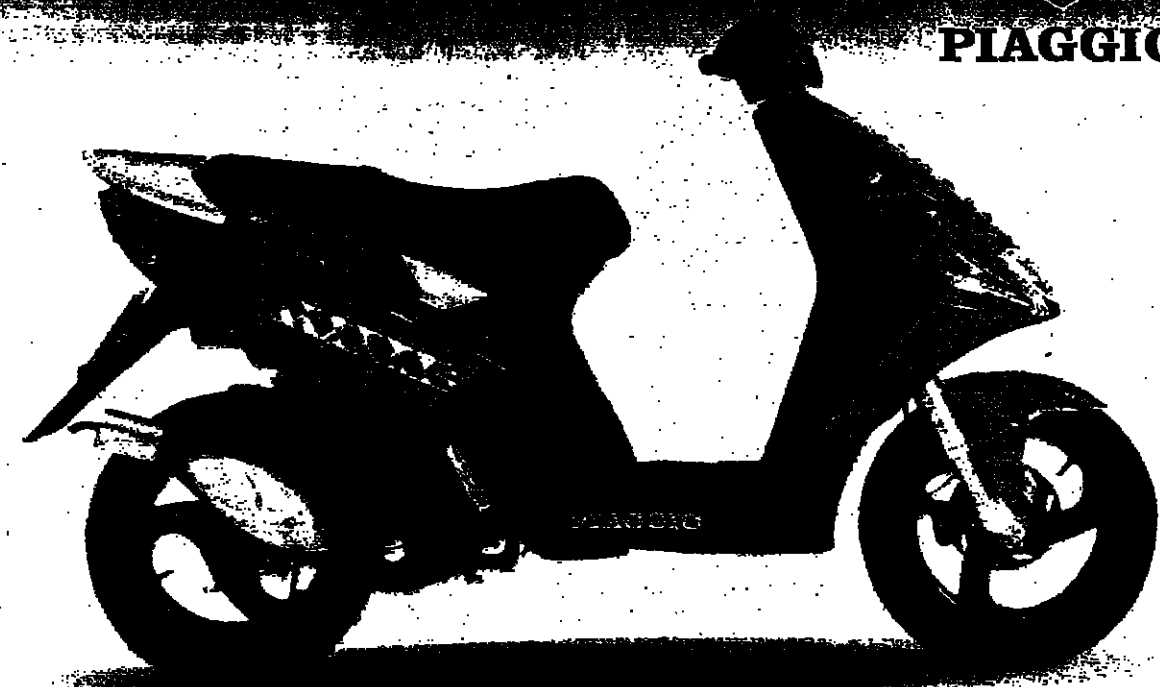
Prison shooting

Alma Ata: Two convicts shot dead eight people, including four policemen, in a jail break-out in Petropavlovsk in northern Kazakhstan, police said. One later killed himself. (AFP)

Star accused

Los Angeles: Christian Slater, 27, star of films such as *Broken Arrow* and *True Romance*, has been arrested for allegedly biting a man in the stomach during a brawl.

Win one of 7 scooters



This week *The Times* gives you the chance to win one of seven fabulous Piaggio scooters worth approximately £11,600 in total. Scooters are the 90s way to get about: fast, safe, ideal for getting through traffic jams, as environmentally friendly as motorised wheels get, and they cost only about three pence a mile to run.

The Vespa, a recognised style icon, was first created 50 years ago and more than 15 million have been sold worldwide. Today we feature the NRG sports scooter, a new addition to the range, with an on the road price of £1,999.

The NRG comes with larger 13ins wheels, twin "fox-eye" headlamps, upside-down forks, rear spoiler and low profile tyres, all complementing the liquid-cooled 50cc engine. Fully automatic transmission allows the rider to

just twist-and-go. An additional attraction is a FREE insurance offer, valid until August 31, 1997. Other Piaggio scooter prizes on offer this week are: two Vespa ET2s; an ET4; a Liberty; a Zip SP (Sport Production) and a Hexagon 125cc.

HOW TO ENTER

Collect four tokens from *The Times* and send them with the entry form, appearing tomorrow, stating which scooter you would like to win. Closing date: Friday, September 12, 1997. Readers must be over 16 to enter.

For further information on the Piaggio range, call 0800 20 30 10



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Afghan allies prepare to take Kabul

Retreating Taliban poison wells and mine villagers' homes as Mujahidin drive fighters to outskirts of capital

FROM MICHAEL DYNES
IN MAZAR-I-SHARIF

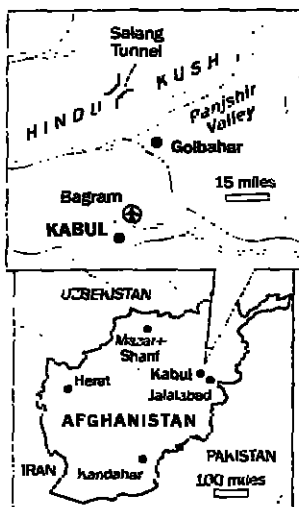
ABOUT 1,500 Mujahidin commanders gathered at the mouth of the Panjshir Valley yesterday to choose an interim government and hammer out their strategy for what they hope will be the final assault on the city of Kabul.

As General Ahmed Shah Masood, the former Government's defence chief, spelt out his plans to erect a security cordon around the city, men and military equipment poured into the Shomali Valley, north of Kabul, in anticipation of a big battle ahead.

General Masood, whose forces had withstood repeated air and ground bombardments launched by the messianic Taliban fighters, now commands unparalleled authority among the various factions that make up the anti-Taliban alliance.

The "northern alliance", made up of General Masood's Tajik fighters, the Uzbek warriors of General Abdul Malik, and the ethnic Shia militia of Karim Khalili, are quietly confident that they are at the beginning of the end of their struggle against the Islamic zealots.

This is not the first time the anti-Taliban alliance has claimed it is on the verge of victory. But they have been buoyed by their victories in the



past three months over the Taliban who have taken a terrible beating. Three weeks ago the "northern alliance" pushed the Taliban back to within 12 miles of Kabul. Now about 6,000 fighters of the alliance are positioned north of Kabul and are ready to launch a huge assault.

General Masood's forces are surprised by their easy victory in the Shomali Valley, which they recaptured for the second time in ten months. That success fuelled exaggerated expectations of a storming of the gates of Kabul early last week.

The majority of the 200,000 inhabitants of the Shomali

Valley have abandoned their homes and farms for safer ground in the hills or far-flung villages. A few remain, tending their crops, despite periodic bombardment from Taliban rocket launchers.

Reports have already reached the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif about the scorched earth policy practised by the Taliban as they were chased into the hills north of Kabul.

People returning from the front line claim that Taliban fighters had thrown dead cows into wells to poison the water supply. A huge Chinese-built pumping station that helped to irrigate the entire plain was blown up. The Taliban have also mined the mud-brick homes of the civilian population, turning them into deadly bobby traps.

These actions have shocked Afghan villagers who have experienced many a horror during 18 years of constant war and civil war. The Taliban may have originally set out to win the hearts and minds of the people, but they now seem to be implementing the dictum of General William Westmoreland, commander of American forces in Vietnam: "Grab them by the balls and their hearts and minds will follow."

Red Crescent officials estimate that about 7,000 civilians



A guard watches over 1,600 Taliban prisoners of war at a camp in the Panjshir Valley. The Red Crescent has been denied access to the captives

and fighters have been wounded in fighting over the past three months. "The number of dead is anybody's guess," an official said. Reports here also suggest that General Masood may be orchestrating simultaneous

assaults on the Taliban-held cities of Jalalabad, east of Kabul, and Herat in the northwest of the country. But it is the prospect of bloody street battles for control of the capital that could lead to untold casualties.

Kabul: The Red Crescent said yesterday a flare-up in fighting in Afghanistan was causing the humanitarian situation to deteriorate. In a press communiqué released in Geneva, the organisation also criticised the "northern alli-

ance" for denying it access to an estimated 3,000 prisoners of war. It said: "The ongoing fighting has prompted a major humanitarian alert."

Of the 7,000 war wounded on both sides of the front line that the Red Crescent has treated in the past three months, an official in Afghanistan said: "We haven't had so many people wounded in a similar period over the last three years. There are clearly signs of an escalation in the conflict." (Reuters)

Cosmopolitan outpost thrives in nation torn by 18-year war

By MICHAEL DYNES

MACHINEGUN nests bristle from the rooftops of this dusty northern desert town. Home to some 600,000 mostly Uzbeks and Tajiks, it is the most cosmopolitan city in Afghanistan, north of the rugged Hindu Kush.

Running water, erratic electricity supply and thriving bazaars, well stocked with farm produce and cheap consumer goods, set it apart from the rest of Afghanistan, which has been laid waste by 18 years of unrelenting conflict.

The occasional burnt carcass of

a Taliban tank or armoured vehicle sits oddly amid rush-hour traffic of battered yellow taxis, donkey carts, herds of camels and goats, and Chinese-made bicycles. The relics of war serve as an eerie reminder of how close the bearded Taliban zealots came to seizing this city during three days of fierce fighting last May.

Although Mazar-i-Sharif may have escaped the worst ravages of the civil war, the conflict has taken its toll on the city and its inhabitants. The mud-walled buildings are in a state of chronic disrepair. Social services have all but disap-

Afghans boast that they have the best surgeons but pigeons fly around operating theatres

peared. There are a few tarred roads, but most are made from mud and gravel and are impassable during the rainy season. Taxes are still collected, but most of the revenue is siphoned off for the war effort. Public salaries are frozen at old levels. If they are paid at all, Afghans boast that after 18 years of war they have the best

surgeons in the world: but pigeons fly in and out of operating theatres. Inflation has sent prices soaring, and public amenities are nonexistent.

This is a city of mud and open sewage. Human effluent flows out of every house into the street. During winter, mud and faeces mix together to form a stinking

quagmire. In summer, the lethal concoction is dried by the sun, blown around by the wind, and settles on produce on offer at the market stalls. Little wonder that typhoid, dysentery and tuberculosis are rampant.

Women cocooned in burqas, the traditional blue, tent-like covering worn by women in Afghanistan, dart around the streets like ghosts. The Muslim attitude to women in the north is more liberal than the version applied by the Taliban in the south. Women can walk around the city freely although they cannot drive. Their job is to

look after home and family while the men go off and fight.

The city is awash with officers of United Nations agencies, the International Committee of the Red Crescent, and assorted non-governmental organisations — all dashing about in expensive, four-wheel-drive vehicles. Admittedly, they are a source of income for some of the more fortunate locals who get jobs with them.

But they are also a source of resentment. Many outside observers expressed surprise when UN offices were ransacked by locals during the fighting in May. The

fact that offices of the Children's Fund were looted by their own guards suggests that some old scores were being settled.

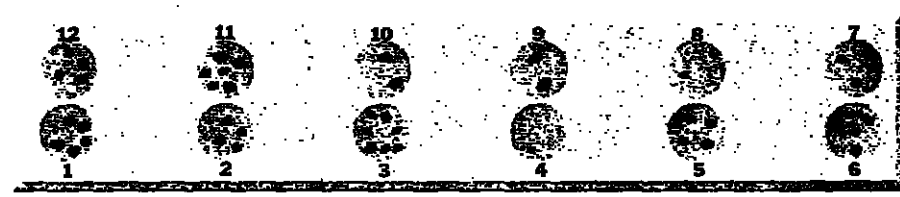
For the most part, inhabitants of the city display the traditional Afghan hospitality towards strangers. Ask how to locate a local address, and you will soon be surrounded by a crowd of people pointing in different directions. But if you break the 10pm curfew, you are likely to be confronted by a Mujahidin fighter showing a rocket-propelled grenade launcher in your face. It is an experience not to be repeated.

THE TIMES CHALLENGE OF THE MIND

Week two of *The Times Challenge of the Mind* competition with £10,000 worth of prizes to be won. To coincide with the first Mind Sports Olympiad, at the Royal Festival Hall, London, from August 18 to 24, and how to enter, call 0171-703 2828.

£500 AWARI PROBLEM by Paul Lamford

Today's puzzle is based on Awari, often called simply Wari, which is a member of the large group of games of the Mancala family which involve sowing seeds from one cup into others. There are almost as many types of Mancala as there are card games and they include Congklak, from Indonesia, Gabara, from Ethiopia and Kiarubi from east and south Africa. The version being played in the Mind Sports Olympiad is Awari, which has two rows of six cups as in our diagram. The game starts with four shells, or seeds, in each of the 12 cups. Play alternates and consists of one player taking the contents of one cup on his side of the board and sowing one seed at a time, always anticlockwise, into each of the following cups. Thus, in our



diagram, if the player at the top of the board is to play, he could take all four seeds from cup 12 and drop one into each of the cups 1, 2, 3 and 4. The object of the game is to capture more seeds than your opponent. Seeds are captured if the last seed dropped into a cup on the opponent's side produces a total of two or three seeds in that cup. In this case those seeds are removed, as are any immediately previous cups which then contain two or three seeds. Thus, in our example move above, the player taking four seeds from cup 12

would capture two stones in cup four, but no others. You may not capture all the seeds on your opponent's side. Occasionally, when there are more than 11 seeds in a cup, you sow all the way around the board, in which case you miss out the cup from which you started and continue sowing. In today's problem, the player on the south-side of the board is to move. How can he capture the maximum number of seeds? Does he start sowing from: a) cup 3? b) cup 5? c) cup 6?

Call our hotline 0891 102 724 (ex UK plus 44 990 200 618) before midnight tonight with your answer, a, b, or c. The winner will get £500. Three runners-up will receive a £50 voucher, donated by Hamleys toy shop for use in its Regent Street or Covent Garden, London, stores. Winners will be chosen at random from all correct entries received and the answer will be published on Friday. Normal competition rules apply.



£10,000 worth of prizes to be won with Challenge of the Mind

TEN MINUTE MENSA PROBLEM

Q1. What number should replace the question mark?

2764	1424	48
5994	4812	202
6883	4824	?

Q2. If D1 = 40 and P1 = 66, what does H2 equal?

Q3. Which is the odd word out?

NECKLACE BRONCH EARRING BRACELET

There's £100 to be won today with this ten-minute Mensa teaser. The winner will be chosen at random from all correct entries received by midnight tonight. Call 0891 102 725 (ex UK +44 990 200 618), 0891 calls cost 50p per minute.

All readers who get two or three of today's Mensa puzzles correct will receive a certificate and a Mensa information pack which includes a home IQ assessment test.

*Paul Lamford is a former editor of *Games and Puzzles* magazine and is currently commissioning editor of chess and bridge for Batsford Books.



DAY 6 (SATURDAY) SOLUTIONS

LINE OF ACTION. Answer b is correct. Black should play c7-c5, capturing the white checker. Black then has two threats: to play c1-d1, making a connected group; or to play c1-b2 making a connected group. There is no defence for White as he has no capture that breaks the chain. White was threatening to win himself with h7-h4, so Black had to act quickly. Patrick Chisholm-Lilly, of Diss, Norfolk, wins £500. **MENSA PROBLEM:** 1.132 - 4.367 - 2.14 centimetres - 3 William Shakespeare. Stuart Hockey, of Sidmouth, Devon, wins £100.

TOMORROW: PLAY DRAUGHTS FOR THE CHANCE TO WIN MORE PRIZES

British lawyer holds key to fate of Singapore party

By DAVID WATTS

SINGAPORE will be the setting for an historic legal confrontation shortly when George Carman, QC, calls Lee Kuan Yew, a Cambridge law double first, to give evidence in a libel case that could bankrupt the leader of the country's Opposition.

On Mr Carman's skills will depend the political future of J.B. "Ben" Jeyaretnam, the leader of the Workers' Party, and the viability of the only serious opposition to the rule of Mr Lee's People's Action Party, which has been in government since independence from Britain.

He will be fighting, too, what the Opposition calls the abuse of the Singapore legal system so that Mr Lee can support what he likes to think of as Asian values.

Such is the international concern over the case that senior legal observers from Australia and Paul Bentley, an Ontario judge representing Amnesty International, will be among those in the gallery.

Mr Jeyaretnam has been a particular *bête noire* of Mr Lee since he entered the Singapore parliament as the first Opposition member in 1981 — "I'm the gadfly," he said in an interview with *The Times*.



Jeyaretnam: amiable lawyer faces ruin

Mr Lee's Confucian mind-set brooks no such concept as a loyal Opposition, and he has lost no opportunity to discredit Mr Jeyaretnam, an amiable and inoffensive lawyer who got involved in politics less out of conviction, than commitment to the memory of his late wife.

Mr Jeyaretnam is in no doubt about Mr Lee's motives: "He's out to bankrupt me, so that I have to give up my seat in parliament." Mr Jeyaretnam has grown wise after two previous legal jousts with the Senior Minister. He now owns nothing beyond a current bank account and will have nothing to yield to the

court should Mr Carman fail to turn the tide in his favour. Mr Lee, he says, is terrified of being questioned by Mr Carman: "He's very good at cross-examination."

The odds against him are formidable, with suits from Mr Lee, Goh Chok Tong, the Prime Minister, two Deputy Prime Ministers, two ministers and five other government politicians.

Mr Jeyaretnam's case stems from the earlier experience of Tang Liang Hong, another Workers' Party MP, who is appealing against £3.75 million in damages awarded against him from an earlier series of suits from government ministers.

Mr Tang accuses the government of "rule by legal terrorism" and says the authorities have continued to use bizarre legal methods to trip him up including filing affidavits "several hundred" pages long which then come to court sometimes in less than a day and before there has been any opportunity to consult legal counsel.

"They are using me as an example to teach other potential dissenters. In a democratic country you could never imagine this happening. These people have forfeited the moral authority to govern," Mr Tang said.

Gangsters kill Indian film mogul

FROM AFP
IN BOMBAY

AN INDIAN film tycoon was shot dead by Bombay underworld killers yesterday as he left a Hindu temple, police said.

The gunman fired 17 bullets at Gulshan Kumar from a taxi. Kumar, who was returning to his car after praying at the temple, was hit in the face, neck and chest.

He was a well-known figure in the Indian film industry, with an empire worth an estimated £130 million. It was the third attack on a film producer in the city in recent weeks.

Manohar Joshi, the Chief Minister of Maharashtra state, said the Bombay underworld "now seems to be targeting the film industry". He announced an investigation into links between the film world and organised crime.

Krishan Dev Shetty, general secretary of the Film Makers' Combine, an association of film producers, said the killing had created panic in the industry. "This is the work of extortionists," he said. "Gawahati: Tribal separatists killed 13 men in the state of Assam in a second day of violent incidents in the region ahead of India's independence celebrations." (AFP)

Iran Cabinet signals cautious reform

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

PRESIDENT Khatami of Iran, who won a surprise landslide victory on a platform of reform, yesterday attempted to avoid a showdown with hardliners by nominating a Cabinet that signalled a commitment to slow change.

However, at least two of his 22 appointments are expected to be fiercely resisted by the conservatives who dominate parliament, which is to begin vetting the nominees next week.

The Cabinet list was keenly awaited as a sign of how independent the President will be of the conservatives. There were enough moderate faces to reassure supporters that he remains committed to social justice and the rule of law, while there were also uncontroversial choices for sensitive posts such as foreign affairs and defence, diplomats said. The energy, oil, industry and economic portfolios

went to technocrats, some of them educated in the US or Europe.

The most contentious appointment was Ayatollah Mohajerani to the influential portfolio of Culture and Islamic Guidance. He has pressed for more cultural freedoms and is still despised by hardliners for once advocating direct talks with the US.

Hardline deputies are also expected to oppose the appointment of Hojatoleslam Abdollah Nouri who, as Interior Minister, would be responsible for implementing Mr Khatami's pledges on easing some of the social restrictions of the past 18 years that have caused much disaffection. Hojatoleslam Nouri is regarded as subversively liberal by hardliners.

The President dropped as Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, a rather dour man who had been Iran's voice in

world capitals since 1981. He was replaced by Kamal Kharrazi, the United Nations Ambassador. He is highly respected in Tehran and regarded as a safe pair of hands, although one hardline newspaper complained that he should be ruled out because he has spent too much time in America. He is not expected to introduce any important changes in foreign policy, a realm which is jealously guarded by Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Also out is the sinister Intelligence Minister, Ali Fallahian, who was held responsible in Western capitals for planning the assassination of dissidents in Europe. He was replaced by a relatively liberal and pragmatic cleric, Qorbanali Dorr Najafabadi.

Leading article, page 17

Blair family holiday drags sleepy village into the limelight

THE two hundred inhabitants of this sleepy village south of Toulouse, who for the past four years have kept Tony Blair's French holiday refuge discreetly hidden, yesterday woke up to find themselves famous and their cover blown.

"Yes, my children play with Mr Blair's children," said Gilbert Bouchet, the village carpenter and joiner who doubles as caretaker at the nearby 12th-century chateau where the Blairs are expected to arrive this weekend after spending two weeks in Tuscany.

M Bouchet seemed bemused and amused by the sudden limelight, as television cameramen filmed him, the village sweep and a lone tractor carrying hay. Nothing much moves in Saint Martin d'Oydes, particularly in the heat of an August day. The little post office, by the medieval church of St

Anastase closes at midday on the dot. There is a village shop, but no cafe, bar or restaurant. The deep silence is broken only by the chime of the church bell.

"Mr Blair walks to the shop to buy bread," M Bouchet said. "Otherwise the family read and swim." M Bouchet's son Nicolas, 15, posed for the cameras on his mountain bike, informing the world that the Blair children — Nicholas, Euan and Kathryn — speak some French, so that although he speaks no English, they play together. "They have not changed since they became the children of the British Prime Minister," he said.

Paul Esquirol, who runs the shop, said his phone had not stopped ringing since the news of the Blairs' imminent arrival broke. "We are suddenly on the map," he said. The chateau belongs to Sir



In tranquil Saint Martin d'Oydes the Prime Minister's summer visit is being hailed as the biggest thing since the Black Death, writes Richard Owen

David Keene, a High Court judge who is part of the Blairs' inner circle of legal friends. Sir David, according to the villagers, "is travelling in Africa" and is not expected back until September. Officials in Paris confirmed that Mr Blair would meet Lionel Jospin, the French Prime Minister — whose constituency is near by in Cingetabelle — next week.

The Blairs are in the second and final week of their holiday on the ten-acre estate of Geoffrey Robinson, the Paymaster General, in the Tuscan hills near San Gimignano,

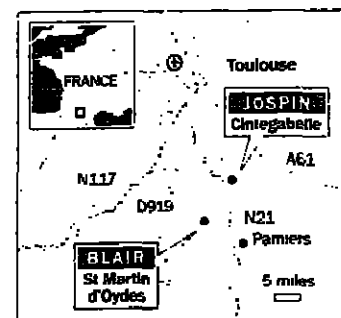
where they first went last summer. Clearly Mr Blair is drawn to the south — although the Arriege, in the foothills of the Pyrenees, is flatter and not as lush as Chianti, with Tuscany's cypresses and olive groves giving way to dusty avenues of plane trees.

This is La France Profonde, with endless fields of wheat and sunflowers punctuated by buildings of red brick and roof tiles. The rambling three-storey Keene villa, which dominates the main village street, is built in the same local style, with a turret at either end. A

high wall fails to hide the house and 45-foot swimming pool. The area is popular with British, Dutch and German tourists.

"I would have thought there was a security problem here for the Prime Minister," said Bruce Anderson, a business consultant from Downe, Kent, who is renting the chateau at the moment with two other families. "The telephone engineers have been in to install extra lines, but we haven't seen any sign of the police or the security services yet."

Unlike in Tuscany, the French highway does not have a tennis court. But there is a games room in case of wet weather — the area was deluged this week — and a video and satellite television (the dish sprouts inconspicuously from one of the turrets). There are four bedrooms, including a children's dormitory, and a large farmhouse



kitchen with flagstones and a giant oak refectory table. The current tenants, who rented the house through an agency and are not personal friends of Sir David, were not told that Mr Blair and his family were arriving next.

"We heard about it from the cook," Mr Anderson said. "Our wives tossed a coin to decide which couple would have the master

bedroom. My wife won. As it happens she's called Pamela, and we're thinking of selling her story to the tabloids, along the lines of 'Pamela Anderson's torrid romps in Tony Blair's bed'."

There is also a library, well stocked with the latest biographies and novels. Guests are required to sign books out and return them, and several have Cherie Blair's signature in the flyleaf from previous visits.

"You need the library because there is nothing else to do here," said Graham Burrill, a retired insurance broker who is also staying at the chateau. "This village is like the Mary Celeste. It would be a big event when the traffic lights changed, except that there aren't any traffic lights. Tony Blair's visit is the biggest thing around here since the Black Death."

GRIGORY DUNOV / REUTERS

Tobacco firms find new haven

FROM ROGER BOYES IN WARSAW

Marlboro Man may be riding into the sunset in the United States and Western Europe but here, in one of the last chain-smoking oases in the world, he is sitting high in the saddle.

Poland, the rest of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union have become the growth area for tobacco companies such as Philip Morris, British American Tobacco and RJ Reynolds which are buying up factories and energetically marketing tobacco.

World Tobacco File, which monitors global smoking patterns, says that while cigarette sales dropped by 4.5 per cent in the US and Canada between 1990 and 1995, and by 1.7 per cent in Western Europe, they soared by 5.6 per cent in the post-Communist world.

There is, however, a fightback by fledgling anti-smoking lobbyists who point to the very high incidence of cancer in Eastern Europe. Marlboro Man and Joe Camel figure prominently on the billboards around Warsaw central station, but so do the health warnings.

According to a new anti-smoking law in Poland, the health warnings will have to cover 30 per cent of the cigarette packaging by the end of the year (compared to about 6 per cent in Western Europe) and 20 per cent of billboards. Poland, in other words, is trying to move quickly towards the US prohibition regime.

Smoking in institutions or public buildings has been banned and the campaigners want to push through a ban on smoking while driving.

But there is a big gap in Eastern Europe between the legislation and smoking practice. In Warsaw hospitals, patients gather in stairwells to puff and doctors rank among the most dedicated smokers. "Nobody enforces the ban," says Iwona Eysmont, a consular assistant who smokes a packet a day.

However, the key factor in the rise in smoking has been the scale of the involvement by tobacco companies. More than \$3 billion (£1.9 billion) has been spent by Western tobacco companies in the region over the past six years.

Ex-bodyguard wins fight to 'expose' Yeltsin

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT Yeltsin's former bodyguard yesterday claimed victory in a year-long battle with the Kremlin when he announced the publication of his memoirs that are likely to embarrass the Russian leader and many key figures in his administration.

Aleksandr Kozhakov, who for more than a decade was the Kremlin leader's closest confidant before his sacking last year, said that the authorities had tried bribes and threats to block the book *Boris Yeltsin: From Dawn to Dusk*, which is out today. "I believe that the people should know the people who rule them," said the burly former KGB agent, who for five years was regarded as the second most powerful man in the Kremlin.

The book portrays Yeltsin as a person and not as a figure behind a mask. Despite his declared noble ideals, the book seems largely motivated by revenge. The two men's relationship was destroyed last year after Mr Yeltsin ignored Mr Kozhakov's advice to cancel presidential elections and then sacked him in a Kremlin power struggle. Yesterday the former bodyguard described his relationship with Mr Yeltsin as "a divorce, final and irrevocable".

After Mr Yeltsin reads the 500-page book, divorce may be

putting it mildly. In page after page Mr Kozhakov describes his former employer as mentally unstable, and at times suicidal, an alcoholic who allowed Russia's key reform period to be hijacked by a corrupt bureaucracy and a criminal business class.

For the first time, the author sets out plausible reasons for the bizarre events in 1994. He writes that Mr Yeltsin was unable to attend an official ceremony at Shannon airport because he had suffered a heart seizure or stroke on the flight over from America. He also gives a detailed account of the incident earlier that year in Germany when Mr Yeltsin seized the baton from the hand of a German military conductor and began to conduct the band at a ceremony for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Berlin.

He also attacks Tatyana Dyachenko, Mr Yeltsin's daughter and adviser, who was instrumental in Mr Kozhakov's removal from power. Describing Mrs Dyachenko as a "bit of fluff", he alleges that she was duped into her role by scheming Kremlin courtiers, in particular Anatoli Chubais, the deputy Prime Minister, and Boris Berezovsky, the billionaire and deputy head of the security council.

Mr Kozhakov claims that

on one occasion Mr Berezovsky discussed murdering Yuri Luzhkov, the Mayor of Moscow, to prevent his presidential ambitions and also talked of killing the mayor's allies, media magnate Vladimir Gusinsky and the singer Iosif Kobzon.

He also takes a swipe at Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Prime Minister, whom he alleges secretly collected 150,000 signatures ahead of last year's presidential elections, in case the Russian leader did not survive to polling day and the premier could put forward his candidacy instead.

The impact of Mr Kozhakov's book, which is due to have an initial print run of 150,000, is unlikely seriously to threaten the Russian leadership. Most of the events contained in the book occurred several years ago, and many of the allegations must be viewed with scepticism, since Mr Kozhakov was himself one of the most notorious figures to emerge from the Yeltsin Kremlin.

Nevertheless, senior Kremlin sources said yesterday that the book would not go unnoticed. "These two men were very good friends, and it still hurts the President to hear these allegations made by someone so close to him for so long."



Alekse Kozhakov, displays the dust jacket of his book *Boris Yeltsin: From Dawn to Dusk*, which is published today. The book portrays the Russian President as suicidal, unstable and an alcoholic

Karadzic 'refused US aid to evade war crimes net'

FROM TOM WALKER IN BANJA LUKA

BILJANA PLAVSIC, the president of Republika Srpska, has disclosed that she and Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, had tried to enable Radovan Karadzic, indicted as a war criminal, to leave Serb territory for a third country.

In a rare interview, Mrs Plavsic said the plan, hatched in June, failed because Dr Karadzic refused point blank. As a result, she is involved in a power struggle with her former mentor.

"I thought it was reasonable," she said. "He is rather young and he has a family. This is the best solution. Bring him in a situation where he has a chance once more. But he refused that. In two weeks



Plavsic power struggle with former mentor

they [the Americans] expected me to be able to say that Dr Karadzic has left. I don't know where he is. But the last time I explained this to him he was full of animosity towards me. I'm really sorry that he lost this chance."

Mrs Plavsic said she did not know where Dr Karadzic would have taken refuge but the fact that the America might have allowed him to escape shows its desire to see him removed from Republika Srpska.

One American diplomatic source in Bosnia said recently that he believed the Karadzic family had already been secretly moved to Russia. Dr Karadzic popped up again last week with an interview in a German newspaper, and for the moment he still controls Bosnian Serb politics and economics through his clan-destine police and smuggling rings run from Pale.

Mrs Plavsic wants to be rid of Dr Karadzic but cannot support his removal by Nato to a tribunal she does not accept. Her way out of the conundrum is to say that she backs the Dayton peace accord — which stipulates that all suspected war criminals be taken to The Hague — but that

she is bound by the Republika Srpska constitution, which prohibits extradition. With her own future so precarious, Richard Holbrooke, the American special envoy, did not mention the subject on his recent visit to Banja Luka. "I was really grateful," she said.

Mrs Plavsic's views on ethnic reintegration are coloured by her former career as biology professor at Sarajevo university. "If rules in society are not well co-ordinated with biological rules then you have a small chance to function," she said.

"[Bosnian] Muslims are by origin Christian. They are not coming from Turkey or the Arabian countries. If you have leaders who want to be included in the Islamic world but the roots are somewhere else then you have the basis for confusion."

An Orthodox cross glinted on her pink dress. Despite these views, which earned her a reputation during the war as a champion of ethnic cleansing, Mrs Plavsic insists that tolerance remains possible in Republika Srpska. "It's going to be multi-ethnic in the way of England or Germany. Nobody thinks it is a territory only for the Serbs," she said.

She angrily rejected United Nations statistics which suggest Serb refugees are more likely to return to the Muslim-Croat Federation than Muslim refugees are to Republika Srpska. "You are completely wrong. Serbs do not like going to the federation. Maybe they are going there to sell their property. I would say more Muslims like to come here than Serbs go to the federation."

Mrs Plavsic claimed that before the war "I had more friends who were Muslim than Serbs". Eventually, she added, the Ferhadija mosque in Banja Luka, razed in 1994, might be rebuilt.

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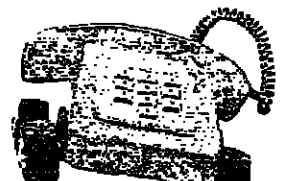
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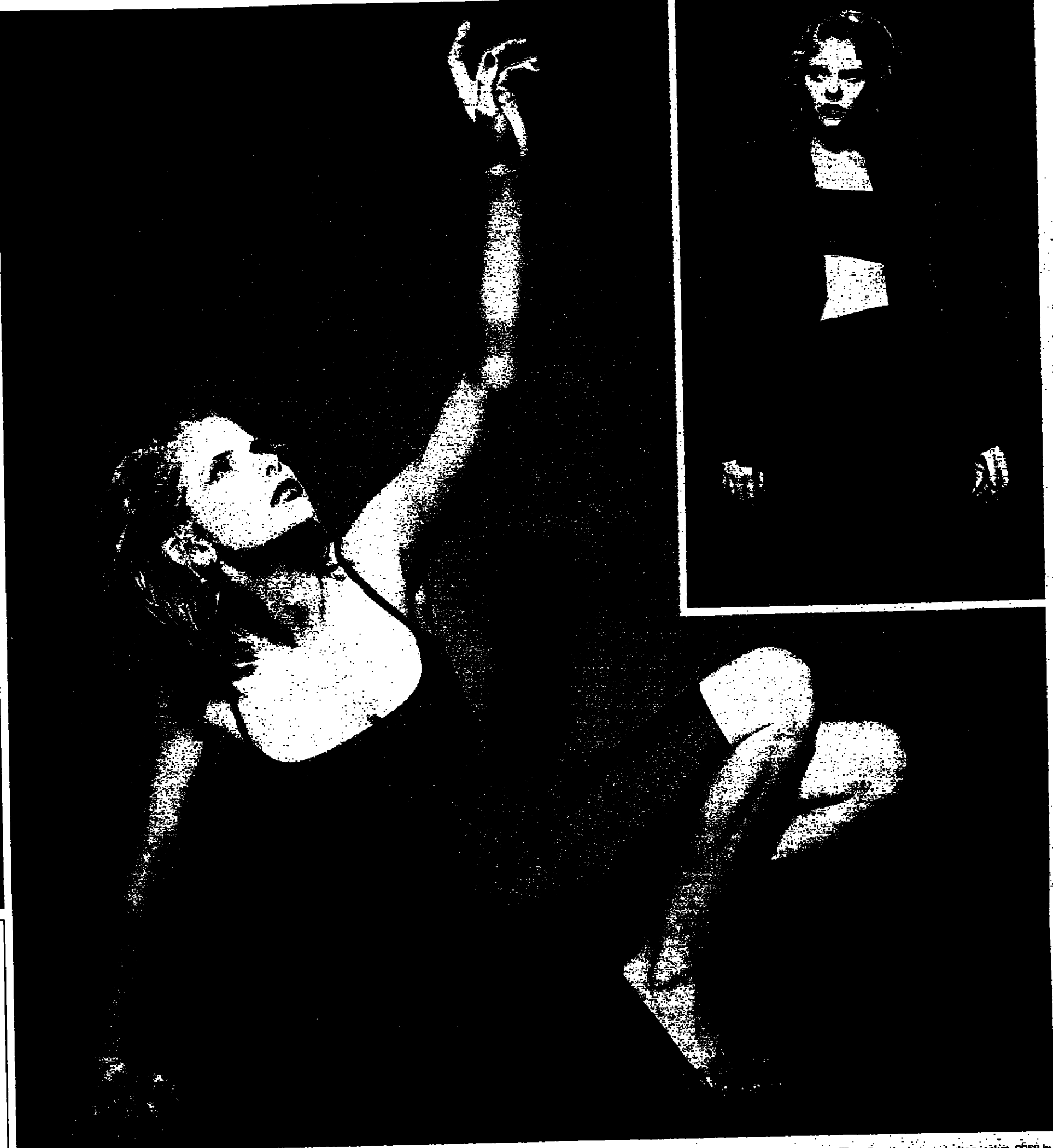
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The rebirth of the blues



LEFT: Indigo denim jacket with turn-up sleeves, £150, and matching skirt, £80, by Helmut Lang at Browns Focus, 38/39 South Molton Street, London W1. Animal-print ankle strap shoes, £250, by Insofito at Russell & Bromley, 24/25 New Bond Street, London W1. Earrings from a selection at Detail, 4a Symons Street, London SW1. ABOVE: Lace vest, £20, and denim skirt, £40, both by Warehouse. Red python court

shoes, £235 by Gina, 189 Sloane Street, London SW1. INSET: Indigo denim one-button jacket, £268 by Clements Ribeiro at Liberty, Regent Street, London W1. Denim A-line skirt, £24.99 and stretch leatherette bustier, £24.99 both by Oasis, 292 Regent Street, London W1. Photographer: TIM WHITE; Stylist: Nicola Goldie; Hair: Matthew Wade at The Industry; Make-up: Daniel Sandler for Nars; Model: Cherry at Select

TAILOR

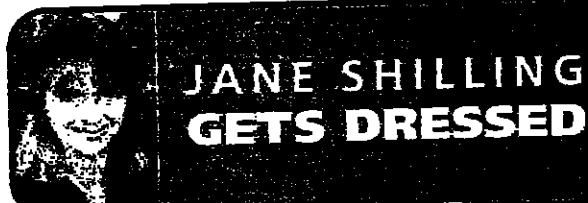
The ultimate issue of the ultimate magazine

OUT NOW

Tragic fall for the hot hipster

I hardly seems the moment, really, to be thinking about tweeds — in the middle of the dog days of August, that parched, enervating month when hardened radio presenters say to weather forecasters, as John Humphrys did this week, "This is hell. Tell us when it is going to stop."

Still, since yesterday, the feathered bodies have been thudding on to the grouse moors, and you may be sure that the guns were not clad in sweet-pea florals with lingerie straps. It may still be steamy in the city, but autumn is on its way, with a snap in the air in the mornings and the arrival in the shops of the winter collections.



JANE SHILLING GETS DRESSED

For those of us in the town, the seasons are measured out in flirty skirts for spring, and power-shouldered autumn *tailleurs*. Right now, the shops look as bedraggled as a late-summer herbaceous border, all drooping linen and wilting crêpe de Chine going grey from being fingered by eager sales shoppers. The sales, of course, bring their own little surge of excitement,

but I've done that, and now I'm ready for something new. Impossible as it may be in these temperatures to imagine actually walking about in double-knit heliotrope chenille or smoke-grey cashmere suiting, there is still a frisson to be had from the sight of it hanging in crisp rows on the shop rails. There is something about the sugary reck of new fabric that affects fashion

victims in much the same way that the smell of cordite is supposed to affect old warhorses. And then there is that exhilarating feeling of On To The Next Thing.

The Next Thing is delivered with a bracingly punitive spin. Reading them is a chastening experience. *Tailor's* list of things I will be wanting to get rid of if I wish to retain any fashion credibility includes every single staple in my wardrobe.

The sexy little kitten heels are destined for the bin; so is the pencil skirt and cardi uniform into which I gratefully fall on every working morning. I remain unmoved by the advice to put into mothballs the "black nylon Prada bag" — which, in my case I have not got — but the really, really terrible news is that bootleg hipsters have also had it. I can't believe it.

After countless attempts to clear this particular fence, staring at myself in the fitting-room mirror and thinking *Oh no, I can't*, I have finally bought myself a pair of bootleg hipsters. I haven't even worn them yet, and now I am told I must consign them to the attic until they come round again. At which point I shall no doubt be accessorising them with Gucci Zimmerman and Armani bifocals.

So what am I going to be wearing this winter? A stout tweed coat just like my grand-ma used to wear, teamed, as she would probably not have thought of doing, with a leopard-print nightie, a little black leather skirt the size of a pocket handkerchief, and a matted, egg-yellow fur inspired, it is claimed, by Big Bird of *Sesame Street*. Oh no, you can't. Oh, but I can. Watch me.

MARKS & SPENCER FINANCIAL SERVICES

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THE BROADCASTING STANDARDS COMMISSION

Complaint from Mrs Lavina Greenbaum — summary of adjudication.

On 24 April 1996 the BBC programme "Hearts of Gold" contained an item about Mrs Joan Brander and her role in the Winged Fellowship Trust. Mrs Greenbaum, who did not appear in the programme, complained to the Commission that the programme had been unjust and unfair to her as it failed to make it clear that she had been the founder of the Winged Fellowship voluntary organisation, which preceded the establishment of the Winged Fellowship Trust, a registered charity.

The Commission considers that the most substantial of the inaccuracies contained in the item were not of the BBC's making, it nonetheless considers that greater account should have been taken of the strong possibility that the inaccuracies in the item would have had the effect of erasing from the record the pioneering contributions of Mrs Greenbaum and others to the foundation of the Winged Fellowship. While the Commission does not consider that the item was as damaging to the reputation of Mrs Greenbaum and her co-volunteers as she understandably felt it to be, they find that there were some elements of unfairness in the item.

Accordingly, the complaint of unfair or unjust treatment is upheld.

You may obtain a copy of the Commission's complete adjudication by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: The Broadcasting Standards Commission (F) 7 The Sanctuary, London SW1P 3JS.

I have ways go even. It's so therapeutic

With the right attitude you can work miracles

'I have always got even. It's so therapeutic'

Philip Seldon always gains revenge — and shows others how. Barry Wigmore reports

When Philip Seldon was a small and skinny schoolboy, he was the child all the others picked on. A callow youth with buck teeth, in the playground he was bullied. In love, he was laughed at.

Philip started leaving embarrassing notes, forged in his adversaries' handwriting and signed with their names so the teacher would find them. Young Philip soon discovered what he believes to be an inarguable fact of life: revenge is sweet.

He moved on to more cunning plays. As a teenager he would report, anonymously, foes who crossed him to the police for traffic violations, such as lights not working on their cars. He knew the lights did not work because he had removed the bulbs.

Seldon has been getting even ever since. In fact he has made a mini-career of it. Now he lectures on the subject in the world's biggest battleground for getting even — New York. There is no shortage of willing disciples wishing to take evening classes and learn from his experiences.

From dumped spouses to angry mothers-in-law and sacked workers, they queue to attend his high altar of revenge. Some of them, and the lessons he teaches, can be seen on *Inside Story* tonight on BBC1.

There is a vengeance whose deep and murderous desire for vengeance on her cruel "dork" of a boyfriend has all the signs of a real

life *Fatal Attraction*. There is Martha who was given ten minutes to clear her desk after 26 years in the same job.

And there is Donna who wants to get even with the man who created a "beautiful fantasy of a marriage" then walked out, leaving only a message on her answerphone. Donna has already burnt £100,000 in computer equipment belonging to her ex, and is eager to learn more tactics.

"I wouldn't advise anything destructive like that," cautions Seldon. "That might be illegal, although it could be argued that the computers were joint property. You must stay within the law." What he does advise can be seen on tonight's programme, he says. "But,"

he adds, "I have heard that my plays work and people feel much better as a result."

Seldon, 56, masterminds his get-even classes from the Manhattan apartment which is also his office. He gives his lectures at local private colleges.

"I have always got even," he says. "It's so therapeutic. How else are you going to sleep at night when someone has hurt you? It's also really quite simple. You look for the weakness. Everybody has one. You plot and you move."

Getting even is not just an American dream of course. There have been some spectacular acts of revenge in Britain. Like Lady Moore who smashed the arms of her husband's 32 Savile Row suits,



"The important thing is not to think too small. Generally speaking, the grander the scheme, the more satisfying the result. No sting is too ambitious — especially if it works"

poured six litres of white paint all over his BMW and distributed his 70 bottles of vintage wine to neighbourhood doorsteps. And Sandy Gall's wife, Eleanor, who dumped his golfclubs, suits and expensive wine outside his mistress's front door.

Seldon admires that play. "The important thing is not to think too small," he says. "Generally speaking, the grander the scheme, the more satisfying the result. No sting is too ambitious — especially when it works."

And he should know. In his other life, Seldon is a wine writer and publisher. At the height of public interest in men on the Moon and

the space programme, he remembers, a group of Nasa men approached him to write a book with them — the inside story of a moon shot.

One was a public relations officer with Nasa, the others said that they were scientists. What he did not know for some time was that they were all claiming to be considerably more important than they were. And they had signed the American equivalent of the Official Secrets Act, which said that no one could write a book without authority, and no individual could claim credit for the team effort.

Seldon wasted months, and money, on research before he

discovered the truth. Then he wreaked revenge in the simplest, most efficient way he knows. By fax.

"I obtained some Nasa letter-headed paper and sent out a press release by fax to the news agencies and wire services, which they circulated to hundreds of newspapers," he recalls. "It credited these men by name as being responsible for some spectacular photographs that had been taken, and gave their boss's names and phone numbers for follow-up questions."

Their bosses were swamped with calls and there was all hell to pay," he recounts with satisfaction. "No matter how much they denied

it no one believed that they had not sent out that release."

Then there was the time Seldon was sacked for no apparent reason. In an elaborate sting he hired a friend, a freelance writer who was already happy with the work he was doing, to apply for the vacancy. Having got the job, the friend messed things up in spectacular fashion before walking out.

"It needs to be a good friend with a real sense of humour," Seldon concedes. "But if you plan a scam well, the satisfaction is enormous."

The best revenge, he says, is when the victim knows that you are responsible but can do absolutely nothing about it. It causes your

adversary inconvenience, embarrassment and better still, money. "I find that, generally speaking, women are better at revenge than men," he says. "They have more patience and the anger bubbles much longer. Men tend to want to lash out. Women can be more devious."

Recently, Seldon has run into a little trouble with his get-even classes. The college where he lectured went into liquidation, and he has found obstacles in his way at others he has approached.

"I just wonder," he muses darkly, "if someone is getting even."

● *Inside Story: Dial V for Vengeance, tonight on BBC1 at 10pm*

Selfridges: not a store, but a temple, where spirituality can be found + Di and Dodi prove a kiss isn't naughty, but nice + Prof and prejudice + The spy who taught me

With the right platitude you can work miracles

I don't surprise me that new figures show department stores are, relatively speaking, enjoying a boom. Having spent Sunday indulging in a spot of retail therapy in Selfridges, fair conditioning, wonderful food hall and coolwear department, open on Sundays, I can attest to their healing powers.

In a mall, it is hard not to feel alienated, infantilised, as if sucked into a Frits Lang film remade by Disney, as one is herded along overlit but sunless corridors like programmed-to-shop sheep. The department store, too, subduces, but it understands that in an age of consumerist worship, we want not villages, but temples: the department store is, as the scholar Peter

Gay established in *The Bourgeois Experience*, the cathedral of the modern age.

Now, the age about which Professor Gay, now at Yale, was writing might have been just as crassly materialistic as our own. But there are worse things to be than crassly materialistic. Indeed, it is when we try to show ourselves to be better — the clumsy pawing after "spirituality" — that we are at our most awful. The self-deceiving, self-congratulatory, woolly-minded platitude that marks the contemporary sensibility is a case in point. Openness, briskness, clarity, understanding: these are meant to represent the spirit of the age. They do not.

I have found what truly represents the spirit of the age

in the basement of Selfridges. It is a book: *Meditations For Women Who Do Too Much*. Everything about it screams Now! The breathy indication of higher thought, of pseudo-philosophical musings, the portentous simplicity of its title, with its prayer-book intonation, the respectful separation of women into a special little huddle with a special, big sensibility, the martyred yet self-aggrandising assumption of saintly and supercharged busyness: this, exactly, is the state we're in.

Every up-to-the-minute cliché about what it is to be female, the distillation of every woman's page, has found its way into this book.

On my first journalistic assignment, I was sent to a festival of clairvoyants and palm readers. I listened to them ply their trades, and the way it worked soon became clear. Their opening gambit clothed itself as criticism — to show their sincerity, their desire to seem at all costs blunt and honest — but the reality of their words was to flatter, thereby ingratiating themselves on the punter, who, in turn, was narcissistically inclined to view that as tokens of their sincerity.

It went like this: "Oh, dear, I can see what your faults are. You do have a problem..." — and here an accusatory pause — "...you're just too hard on yourself. Give, give, give..." and so on in this vein. *Meditations For Women Who Do Too Much* (I can't stop repeating this wonderful title) pulls the same trick. Each day's meditation is prefaced by a bonus platitude of

Nigella Lawson



its own. Thus, for March 19, we have from "Lynn": "We workaholics make so many promises that no human being could possibly keep them. That is one of the ways we keep ourselves feeling bad about ourselves."

How anyone could get so much self-pity and self-aggrandisement into one sentence is beyond me — but beyond the sphere of this book. I can't help feeling that the women who read it maybe do not do quite enough if they have time to ponder such issues as "Nothing I do is too tiny or too tedious to be spiritual," or "To err is human, to forgive divine. To be forgiven, to forgive myself and others is divinely human."

In another entry, the author has the audacity to compare the discouragement a woman feels during the course of her

working life with the difficulties Anna Akhmatova, the Russian poet, wrote about.

"I have wished for a miracle, and I can be one," the author concludes one day. "Who is the person I call me?" she asks on another. "She has the potential of being one of the most interesting persons I have ever met. Yet I hardly know her."

It would be hard to find more concentration of self-absorption, New Age daffiness and almost parodic homespun philosophising if you tried. Women tied themselves to the barricades, threw themselves under the King's horse — and for this?

The homily for today, August 13, focuses on how much we seek to control ourselves, and ends with the uplifting thought: "No wonder we don't smile much!" You said it, lady.

We live, we know, in a sexually degenerate land, a land where the old virtues of constancy, faithfulness and virginity have lost whatever currency they once had. We follow our leaders, hopping from lover to lover, from bed to bed, without a thought for what our actions mean.

We know that we do this, because the tabloid press tells

Miss M's class background

A NEWSPAPER account of Eliza Manningham-Buller, the newly appointed woman tipped to take over M15, offers the information that, for some time, friends had thought she was a teacher. Now it turns out she is a spy.

But the pose as teacher was no subterfuge. Indeed, I remember Miss Manningham-Buller: she taught me English. Not for long, it's true, and I can't remember much about the lessons (my fault, I'm sure), but it now gives a glamorous gloss to my otherwise unspectacular schooldays.

Question of intelligence is not so black and white

PROFESSOR Richard Lynn, of Ulster University, says that whites are more intelligent than blacks because they had to think cleverer thoughts to find food in cold lands. Never mind that Professor Lynn's being both white and the progenitor of this eccentric theory would seem, by definition, to work against its proof. Think, rather, that all theories of racial hierarchies of intelligence must maintain consistency in the anthropological long term. And yet, this has not always been the case within such studies. Or what, then, could

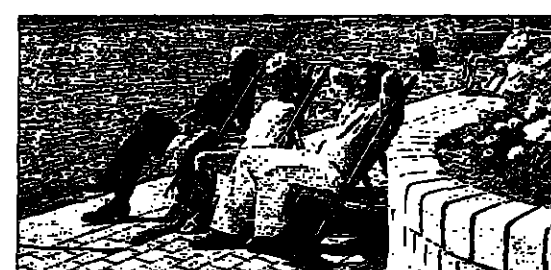
explain the intellectual gains made by the immigrant group that routinely appeared at the bottom of the list when intelligence was measured at the turn of the century? The same group that The Bell Curve, the last hyped study of comparative racial attributes, showed was now at the top of the heap. For the Ashkenazi Jews to have made such extraordinary and "intelligent" leaps in the course of one century is bewildering: unless, of course, we take into account the crucial factor of the changing acceptability of any particular prejudice.

Diana, goddess of the chaste

us that we do. The tabloids know that we live in a land squirming with lust, where every nod is just as good as a wink — and sometimes even better.

It's odd, then, isn't it, to

discover that, in the midst of all of this writhing, those same tabloids are able to write that a single photographed kiss from a princess is not a signal of mere sexual attraction, but of true romance and, what is more, certain-sure to lead to the altar. So decent, these tabloid commentators, able to retain such purity of thought in this wicked, wicked world.



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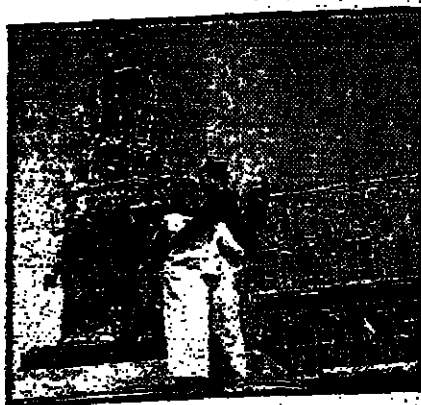


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MEDIA
Shock tactics: Giles Whittell on the US agony aunt heading for London Pages 20-21



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Alan Coren



Battered fish, chip shots and carpical mania at the water hazard

Someone very dear to me has just been killed by a golf ball. I am still in shock. I was the one who discovered the corpse. I discovered it soon after I discovered the golf ball, because it was the golf ball which first came to my notice, being more noticeable than the corpse beside which it was floating. Since a shrewd guess will now be forming in your imagination, I suppose I should confess that, when I say very dear to me, I exaggerate somewhat: you cannot call two quid dear, even though it would probably be a fever by now; the body is a lot bigger than it was six years ago when I carried it home with nine others in a plastic bag from Hendon Fishworld, in addition to which goldfish prices have doubtless shot up along with everything else. But anyway, dear or not, we have shared the same garden since 1991, it in the pond. I on the rim, and have grown as close to one another as those circumstances and our differing species permit and while I may agree that had it been the fish who discovered me in the pond, dead of a golf ball, it might not have gone into shock. I cannot accept that the loss of a close fish is in any way mitigated by the possibility that the affection was unrequited. Especially when the loss is exacerbated by its nature.

Someone killed the fish. Not in self-defence — I rather doubt that the fish leapt from the pond and set about a passing golfer, forcing him to protect himself with the first weapon that came to hand — but either deliberately or unwittingly, and I want the culprit nailed. For myself I find it has to be myself. I am not walking into my local nix with a dented goldfish and a Dunlop 65 and demanding to see the Chief Superintendent of the Serious Fish Squad. I am pretty certain that it cannot be the former: were some kind of crackpot stalking Crickwood's sporadic wetlands and hurling golf balls at their fauna, I think I should have heard. I believe it to be another kind of crackpot, a conviction sustained, furthermore, by two other telling pieces of evidence, one in the guttering of my garden shed and one at the foot of my acacia: along with the carpical Exhibit A, they would seem to constitute incontrovertible proof that, out there beyond my back wall, some madman is playing golf.

The question is, if I am going to stand any chance of nailing him, how far beyond? Did he, that is, tee off with a driver to reach my premises from a couple of hundred yards away, or take only, say, a Number 8 iron from half that distance? Or might it have been no more than a sand-wedge, chipping into my pond from another garden a mere street away? Did he stand there, bunkered perhaps in a neighbour's sandpit or stymied behind a plastic elf, and did he finally swing, ready to cheer his deft escape, only to see the arcing ball plummet into the notorious hazard known throughout golfdom as Coren's Pond? And what about Coren's Gutter and Coren's Tree? Was that him on two earlier rounds? Or does he play with a couple of equally inept madmen? Might they, indeed, be a foursome, one of them either too incompetent to clear my wall, or competent enough to clear my house? Where, if the latter, did this one go after that? Is the green somewhere across the road, beyond my frontage? I know only that my garden isn't the green. I have looked for a hole in my lawn, but though there are, of course, several, there is none that seems large enough. Certainly none with a flag in it.

You see, do you not, where deduction ends yet nailing fails to start? Since I do not know where in the national fairway my garden lies, I have no idea where this swine, these swines, is/are shooting from. I do not know when they do it. I have heard no one, I have seen no one, and may never do either, especially as their balls have been left where they lay, suggesting, perhaps, that my garden was never the target at all, merely the victim of three wild slices at the dog-leg fourth up the road.

Then again, I suppose it's always on the cards that he/they heard the unmistakable noise of gutta-percha meeting goldfish, twigged that a major crime had been committed, and slunk away like the politicians they are. I hope so. I hope they have been put off their stroke for good. There are nine more dear ones in the pond, and they have had enough of golf.

Tim Hames reports on the feuding that could see the fall of America's most powerful political dynasty

Is this the end of the line for the Kennedys?

Solidarity, Joseph Kennedy always told his sons, would be the source of their salvation. Until now that dictum has been respected by the entire Kennedy dynasty. Through tragedy and scandal, the clan stuck together and retained its political influence. This makes it even more astonishing that John Kennedy Jr., the son of the slain President, has broken ranks and assailed two cousins for their private failings. His attack on Michael Kennedy, the son of Robert Kennedy, for his apparent affair with a teenage babysitter, will have little lasting importance. His assault on Michael's elder brother, Joseph Kennedy II, is far more consequential and will be deemed treachery within the family.

Joseph Kennedy II's electoral fate is critical to the continued power of the Kennedys. After ten years in Congress, serving a district that once sent John F. Kennedy to the House of Representatives, he intends to become Governor of Massachusetts. If he is elected, to the only position of consequence within the state that a Kennedy has never held, then he will become a figure of real importance within the Democratic Party. If not, he is finished. The family's hold on Massachusetts affairs — a Kennedy has held office there for every year but two in the past half-century — will end when Edward Kennedy eventually retires from the Senate.

Unfortunately, Congressman Kennedy is not the ideal figure to lead either his family or Massachusetts into the next millennium. He seems to lack the intelligence, oratorical skills, or personal charm of his father. His record during a decade in Washington has been widely viewed as dismal. His major "interventions" of note have been in foreign policy — essentially, Northern Ireland — where his ceaseless promotion of the IRA's cause has doubtless pleased his partisan constituents, but has otherwise been an embarrassment. He also dumped his first wife, Sheila. She promptly savaged him in print for having pressed her into an annulment. It was the Congressman's inept attempt at a public apology that prompted John Kennedy Jr.'s condemnation.

Nevertheless, the entire might of the Kennedy machine will be deployed to make Joseph Kennedy II the Governor. Too much is on the line to permit trivial issues — such as a transparent lack of relevant qualifications — to enter electoral

calculations. All the traditional weapons in the Kennedy arsenal will be deployed in the quest for, first, the Democratic Party nomination ten months hence, and then the final contest in November next year. The Congressman will vastly outspend any other candidate. His television commercials will shamelessly exploit public sympathy for his assassinated predecessors. The clan will also use its powers of persuasion to prevent other potential contenders from entering the race.

The early signs are that the strategy might be depressingly successful. Joseph Kennedy has already made it clear that he will spend more than \$10 million in the quest for office. Several alternative candidates from within the Massachusetts Democratic ranks have decided that they simply cannot compete at that level. Only one figure of real rank, State Attorney-General Scott Harshbarger, is inclined to make the race — but he has already found past financial contributors unwilling to commit themselves in a

contest against the Kennedys. Meanwhile, the most popular Republican in the state, William Weld, removed himself from the Massachusetts political scene last month with his resignation as Governor. His departure came after President Clinton rather conveniently offered him the post of US Ambassador to Mexico. Without him, the Republicans are inconsequential.

The Kennedys have proved past-masters at winning elections regardless of their personal merits. Jack Kennedy ran for President in 1960 at the age of 43 despite very modest qualifications. Former President Harry Truman complained bitterly that the nomination had been bought for Kennedy by his billionaire father. Once elected, Jack appointed his brother as Attorney-General. That provoked outrage from the American Bar Association, who complained, correctly, that Bobby had no experience of legal practice. After the President's assassination, his brother sought election to the Senate from New York — a

state in which he barely met the residency requirements.

But even this audacity was outstripped by the methods used to elevate Edward Kennedy to the Senate. When Jack Kennedy won the White House, his Massachusetts Senate seat fell vacant. Bobby Kennedy's selection as Attorney-General removed the obvious successor from contention: that left Teddy as the sole remaining brother.

Unfortunately, Teddy was then 28 years old and the American Constitution stipulates that senators cannot be younger than 30. An almost unknown figure named Ben Smith, Jack Kennedy's Harvard University room-mate, a man of no prior or subsequent electoral experience, became a senator for two years and then retired into obscurity once Teddy Kennedy became available.

It remains to be seen whether the tricks and techniques of the past can still deliver the citizens of Massachusetts. If the family can elect Joseph Kennedy II to the Governor's mansion, then the clan can survive into the next century. If the electorate votes its candidate down, then an extraordinary era will have drawn to an end. It would be ironic if that process of political decline was assisted by the son of the only Kennedy to have attained the highest office that the United States has to offer.

Honour among vulgarians

The true purpose of the press is to make the complex simple and to grab the reader's eye. But it neglects this in its welter of synthetic rage over Mandelson and its tasteless hounding of the Princess



Simon Jenkins

am not so sure about the press. Mr Mandelson's job is to co-ordinate the presentation of government policy. He wants to put it in the best possible light. With his colleague, Alastair Campbell, he has pioneered a new technique of media relations that involves treating journalists not with the obsessive intimacy of a John Major but with open contempt. They have discovered that most journalists, if sufficiently insulted, capitulate, especially if they work for the BBC.

Mr Mandelson goes walking with the BBC boss, John Birt. No BBC journalist can tell what passes between them, so why risk upsetting the easily upset Minister without Portfolio? This is not spin-doctoring, but spin-neurosis. The technique is well-documented in Nicholas Jones's excellent *Soundbites and Spindocors*.

Mr Mandelson is doing the oldest job in British politics and doing it well. He is putting across the boss's case. Until last May the political media was walling that the poor Tories "had no Mandelson". Mr Major had nobody

with sufficient authority to knock heads together and make sure ministers did not shoot each other in the foot. The new Tory leader, William Hague, has even set out to "find a Tory Mandelson". For the Tories to protest that Mr Mandelson is too effective is hypocritical. They are jealous.

That is understandable. For the press to make the same complaint against Mr Mandelson is ludicrous. For the past week he has been portrayed as a near-criminal manipulator. To limit the damage of Robin Cook's separation from his wife, he leaked news of an inquiry into a possible security lapse by Chris Patten. His apparatus leaked

pseudo-news about the Royal Yacht. Nor was this all. Mr Mandelson kept popping up on radio and television to put Tony Blair's first 100 days in a good light. To crown the indignity, when a BBC reporter asked him pertinent questions, he was more than pert back. He was rude. The media's entire August shift burst into collective tears of indignation.

Mr Mandelson may not have been wise to court so much personal publicity this past week. As every bowler knows, the best spin is concealed. But the media has made an ass of itself. Since the days of Harold Wilson, Downing Street has drip-fed the lobby with daily news, views and little-tattle. On the old *Evening Standard*, a call came each morning from Trevor Lloyd-Hughes with the Prime Minister's spin on the day's events, hoping to influence the lunchtime edition. The key to such spin is the close relationship between impresario and chief. Sir Bernard Ingham had that relationship with Margaret Thatcher, so does Mr Mandelson with Mr Blair. It is unusual whether the impresario is an official or a minister.

The accountability is direct to the top. Such public relations has long been part and parcel of modern government.

Good journalism detects spin. Last week, editors were free to check back with defence and security staff whether the leaks were likely to be true, or were merely smoke to deflect them from Mr Cook. They could disregard the leak or downplay it. Downing Street cannot order news into a bulletin. Mr Mandelson cannot demand to be on the BBC. Today programme or *World at One* or *Breakfast with Frost*. He gets invited, usually by interviewers desperate to show how much tougher they are than their rivals. Competition among these interviewers is now as frenetic, and often as dumb, as between tabloid picture editors.

The fact is that the British media last week bought duff goods from the wildest salesmen in town. It was professionally negligent. When exposed, it sought a scapegoat in Mr Mandelson himself. He was suddenly not a wonder boy but a master manipulator of poor, defenceless journalists. *The Independent* on Sunday even wrote a headline, "Polls say Mandelson is a vote-loser". There was no poll, just an unspecified Tory party "focus group". This trick, of presenting one biased story as if to balance another, may please politicians. The readers are twice deceived.

Those who cry out for media respectability risk the triteness of American press theorists. Walter Lippman called newspapers "the only serious book most people read every day". Jefferson had gone further and suggested that "if forced to choose between a government without newspapers and newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate to prefer the latter". Neither sage can have read a British newspaper in August.

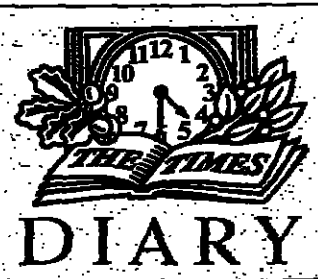
Laws to curb the press are again up for debate. They are either illiberal or unworkable. But when newspapers misbehave and the law is silent, people will start arming themselves against journalists. Diana, Princess of Wales, and Peter Mandelson were both doing their jobs last week, and doing them rather well. The obscene hounding of the one was tasteless and unethical, and is likely to invite privacy curbs on photo-journalism. The pusillanimous whingeing about the other was sloppy journalism, and will encourage this Government to treat the profession with ever more unrelenting contempt.

I like the concept of a vulgar press. Journalists should always battle to make the complex simple and to grab the reader's eye with novelty. Otherwise British newspapers will go the way of most American ones. They will be dull, and read only by an elite. But there must be honour even among vulgarians. Defining the limits of vulgarity is a job best done by the media itself. If it refuses, the limits will be fixed by others, and they will be tight.

United we stand

SALVATION is at hand for Sir Desmond Pitcher, the pilloried chairman of United Utilities, in the improbable form of the Duke of Edinburgh. Pitcher clung onto his job at United at an emergency shareholders' meeting yesterday, despite having seen off two chief executives and being publicly ridiculed as the fattest of the fat cats. Now, he has been lined up to take over as head of the World Fellowship of Donors to the Duke of Edinburgh Awards inter-

national scheme, in the new year. Pitcher has somehow managed to time the news of his colossal bonus payments to coincide with a mass wall of complaints from those who use his water supplies. An immodest man, with tastes in gold watch-chains and light-brown car dealer overcoats, he makes a strange bedfellow for the Duke. Nonetheless, last November, as Pitcher found himself bullet-dodging over the scale of his bonuses, the Duke stepped up to the plate by



going to open the North West Water centre in Warrington for him.

Pitcher is a curious choice for reasons besides his poor dress sense. His stewardship of the Merseyside Development Corporation was not a great success. Furthermore, he has been severely criticised at United for his parochial outlook and reluctance to look abroad to expand, as his European rivals have done. Not ideal qualifications, one would have thought, for one about to head an international fundraising body.

Home truths

THE main attraction at the Edinburgh Literary Festival yesterday was a public row between Margaret Forster, the novelist and biographer, and her husband, the writer

and journalist Hunter Davies. Wearing a Martin Bell-style white suit, Davies agreed to interview Forster before a packed marquee. This was no gentle bicker over the marmalade. Mrs Davies squashed her husband's theories about her literary output, accused him of never reading her books, or understanding fiction at all, and rebuked him for over-enjoying such public occasions as the festival and the craven admiration of fans. "You're like Mr Toad. You're in floods of tears if people aren't charmed by you," Ms Forster told



"We're after rogue Scots Labour MPs today, William"

her husband. "I was always the cat who walked by herself." Davies's last ill-advised question, "Are you a feminist?", elicited a shrill: "Of course!" What does that mean? asked Davies. "Oh God!" said a theatrical Forster. The good ladies of Morningside should be assured that the Davieses have been happily married for 37 years.

After my report yesterday concerning the failure of Peter Mandelson, the Minister without Portfolio, to renew his car tax, his car has disappeared from the street outside his house, to the safety, one hopes, of an off-street parking space. Only five more days till the clippers take hold, minister.

Role call

AT the age of 94, Sir John Gielgud has one more grand acting part in mind. He wants to play Sir George Sitwell, the eccentric father of Edith and Osbert Sitwell, friends of the youthful Gielgud. Sir John declared his ambition when he sat recently for a portrait by John Stanton Ward which will hang in the Queen's private gallery of members of the Order of Merit. Gielgud was awarded the OM earlier this year. "I spent two mornings with

him," said Ward, who is 80, from his home near Ashford in Kent. "but it would have been marvellous if it had been a hundred. I was having a left-handed conversation while my right was drawing. His enunciation was wonderful, but as I am deaf I had to concentrate like mad."

Labour's hands-on approach to government does not seem to extend to its inquiry into the state of its Scottish members after the suicide of Gordon McMaster, the late MP for Paisley. Nick Brown, the Government Chief Whip, who is supposed to be overseeing the inquiry, has spent the past week as far from Paisley as is imaginable. Because of redecorating work in his offices in No 12 Downing Street, he has been lodging it up in No 11 in the oak-panelled offices of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. No 11 is widely rated as the most salubrious address in Whitehall and is unoccupied while Gordon Brown holidays in America.

In the cold

SHOWING a touching concern for the egos of others, Mel Gibson, the gnomish Australian film star, was in London on Monday night for the premiere of his latest film, *Conspiracy Theory*. As the entertainment



Gibson: in the limelight

press gathered to bowl questions to the stars, a rather frazzled publicist pleaded with the assembled press corps not to ignore the film's director, Richard Donner. "I know Mel's the draw card, but for purely political reasons, do you think you could direct a few token questions to Richard as well?" she asked. "It would make Mel happy too."

It was to no effect. Donner stood fidgeting as all screams, lenses and thrusting microphones were directed firmly at Gibson.

P.H.S.



Desmond Pitcher and the Duke of Edinburgh, his new boss





ABOVE SUSPICION

Peers should declare their financial interests

The long arm of the Committee on Standards in Public Life is now poised to extend into the House of Lords. Having illuminated the darkest corners of the House of Commons, then created a rigorous regulatory framework for MPs, Lord Nolan has devoted some of the summer recess to contemplating a similar review of standards in the Lords. He himself is eager to return to his career as a law lord, but his successor will find the Committee eager to turn its attention to the 'Other Place'. One of its members, Lord Shore of Stepney, has already given notice that he expects peers to abide by the new obligation on MPs to declare their financial interests.

Yet it seems that many members of the Lords would disagree. Some two hundred active peers have refused or omitted to declare their interests in the latest register. Their reasons for declining what has hitherto been largely a voluntary disclosure no doubt vary greatly. In the past, it has been left to the discretion of peers to decide whether an interest might 'affect the public perception of the way in which they discharge their parliamentary duties', and ought therefore to be made public. Baroness Thatcher, for example, may well believe that she has earned the trust of her peers; as she has long since ceased to hold political office, no vital public interest is damaged by her decision to exercise discretion.

Lord Parkinson's case is, however, quite different. By accepting the senior post of Chairman of the Conservative Party, he assumed certain obligations. The fact that he is in Opposition does not alter the fact that he wields power and patronage. Such a figure must be seen to be above suspicion. Not that he has any reason to fear transparency: his ten directorships are no secret. The boards on which he sits value his actual experience, not his potential influence. Declaring these directorships in the Lords' register was a mere formality, but one which

the Conservative Chairman would have been wiser to regard as his duty. His failure to do so has blunted his attack on Lord Simon of Highbury's similar oversight.

Lord Parkinson's omission is all the odder given that several of his former colleagues have declared their interests. Indeed, the multifarious skills and accumulated wisdom of the peers are the principal glory of their House. As the Commons becomes an ever more narrowly oligarchical body of professional politicians, the Lords' role as a scrutinising chamber positively requires them to retain a generous mixture of intelligent generalists and specialists from other walks of life. The more useful public servants they may be — provided they are frank about them.

For the Lords to pre-empt Lord Nolan and his committee may also be a matter of institutional survival. Though the Upper House has sometimes anticipated the Lower — notably in broadcasting debates — its palpable lack of transparency now seems anachronistic. True, the Other Place has seen little lobbying and no scandals; but this does not justify complacency. The election of a Labour Government, able to steamroller a constitutional revolution through the Commons, should scotch the argument that the Lords does not matter: it may yet become the real opposition.

Atlee called the Lords "a glass of champagne that has stood for five days". The taxpayer will no longer pay for the best club in town. If the House of Lords is to preserve its distinctive character, while performing its proper function as a revising chamber, then it needs to show the Nolan committee that it can reform itself. Peers are legislators, and they should adhere to the same standards, including disclosure of interests, as MPs. To reformulate Acton: all power tends to corrupt, and absolute openness is the only antidote.

OPAQUE IRAN

The new President may be powerless to effect real change

The composition of the Cabinet nominated yesterday by Muhammad Khatami, the new Iranian President, is disappointingly cautious. Those disappointed will include not only policymakers in the West, whose eagerness to identify Iranian "moderates" has led them into embarrassing miscalculations in the past, but the millions of Iranians who cheered last May's sweeping election, victory of this mild-mannered cleric as a merited popular rebuke to the dihard cabals that run Iran's theocracy.

In Iran's medieval power structure, the shape of the Government is only one part of an equation which is impossible to calculate accurately because so much real power is wielded by unaccountable bodies such as the Council of Guardians and shadowy religious foundations. They answer to Iran's omnipotent spiritual leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who sets the broad domestic agenda, controls key appointments to the judiciary, armed forces and media and dominates foreign and defence policy.

But this Cabinet was Mr Khatami's first opportunity to show how serious he is about reforms. The emphasis on technocrats for the key domestic ministries will not be enough to impress Iranians; the outgoing President, Hashemi Rafsanjani, also had his "California mafia". The few identifiably liberal appointments in social portfolios will not make up for his failure to appoint a single female minister. Yet it would be premature to conclude that Iranians who long for more competent and tolerant government, and who believed his campaign promises to improve respect for the rule of law, champion women's rights, work for more social justice and allow greater latitude in private life, were wrong to vote for him.

The President has to submit his list to the Iranian Majlis. Its Speaker, Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri, was spectacularly defeated in

the presidential race despite — or because of — being championed by Ayatollah Khamenei. The President must sense the knives at his back. An equally plausible explanation for this uninspiring debut, therefore, is that he dares not risk early public humiliation at the hands of the hidebound conservative mullahs who dominate the Majlis.

He has reason to take his opponents seriously. They have already engineered the arrest, since the elections, of prominent liberals identified with him. But what such caution does indicate is that any easing of the repressive shackles of arbitrary power, exercised since the 1979 revolution in the name of religious dogma, will be both slow and all but invisible, even to Iranians.

At his inauguration ceremony, Mr Khatami held out at least half an olive branch to the outside world. He spoke of the importance of "dialogue between civilisations" and "detente" in Iran's foreign relations, and promised to "avoid any action or behaviour causing tension". In this, he speaks for the many Iranians who chafe at the inglorious isolation imposed on them.

These words are worth weighing, but in scales loaded with scepticism. There is no evidence that Iran has stopped bankrolling Islamist terror. The *fatwa* against Salman Rushdie, an outrageous affront to international law, still stands. Iran may be close to developing nuclear weapons and has, notably, yet to sign the protocol to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty that would permit effective inspections. In America, critics who contend that containment of Iran has failed can draw no cheer from the dismal collapse of Europe's efforts at "constructive dialogue". It is just possible that Mr Khatami is the interlocutor the world has been looking for since 1979; but Iran has too many scores against it for the West to be prodigal with carrots just yet.

EVIL EMPIRE

The Good, the Bad, and the British

A decent villain is hard to find nowadays. For more than 40 years the Cold War supplied Hollywood with an inexhaustible farrago of baddies. Communies and spies. But when the Berlin Wall came down, action movies lost more than just an evil empire: they lost all their Russian anti-heroes.

The Chinese, still spouting communist ideology, could perhaps stand in: but they were too inscrutable. The Germans were passe, apart from a lingering trace of the old Nazi in *Blatler*. Sicilian Mafia had a brief, Oscar-winning run, but fell foul of the powerful Italian American lobby. Middle Eastern villains were promising but when Arab Americans went to court to file defamation suits over *The Crimson Jihad*, studio lawyers whispered into the ears of film moguls and the next five sequels were all cancelled. And so the movie-makers returned, after a deeply felt absence, to their favourite villains: the British.

As a letter to *The New York Times* noted sardonically, whether it is history (*Michael Collins*, *Braveheart*), drama (*The Silence of the Lambs*), thriller (*The Devil's Own*) or the children's animation (*The Lion King*), the men with the sinister leers and evil plans have all been British or had English accents. So imprinted is the stereotype that Britons have portrayed even American baddies (Ant-

hony Hopkins in *Nixon*) while British heroes such as Robin Hood or James Bond have been usurped by Americans or Irishmen.

This is splendid news. It continues a long tradition that gave such cut-glass British stars as Trevor Howard (*Mutiny on the Bounty*) and George Sanders (*Rebecca*) continuous employment. It has paved the way for Gary Oldman, Alan Rickman and Charles Dance to smear, plot and double-cross their way across the screen. Even the children are again being brought up on horrible Brits. Who can forget Disney's serpentine, insinuating Sir Hiss, the only one in the Sheriff of Nottingham's entourage who had a Terry-Thomas English accent?

What, to British ears, is extraordinary is that every villain has elegant, rounded vowels. It probably all goes back to 1776, when the heroic but simple American soul confronted King George's privileged officer class and won. There is something about British English that to American ears implies social grace, effortless superiority and high culture far above anything found in Connecticut or Kansas. How satisfying, therefore, to know that it is all a façade, that the Briton on screen is hypocrisy incarnate, a traitor and a coward. Of course he will know which fork to use at dinner. But is that not the ultimate intimidation?

Role of the CPS in high-profile trials

From His Honour Judge Morrell

Sir, You report today that the acquittal of three footballers and a businessman of conspiring to fix Premier League matches is "yet another blow to the beleaguered Director of Public Prosecutions, Dame Barbara Mills, QC".

This view of the role of the Crown Prosecution Service, which has been reflected in press comment on the results of other high-profile trials recently, such as Maxwell, is misconceived, unfair and dangerous.

The duty of the CPS is enshrined in the Code for Crown Prosecutors: in cases where it judges the chances of a conviction as better than even and a prosecution to be in the public interest, it must lay the facts before the court fairly and impartially. The duty of the advocate who prosecutes is to act as a minister of justice and not to strive officiously for a conviction.

Within such a framework, it is inevitable that a proportion of prosecutions result in acquittals: in 1996-97, 40 per cent in the Crown Court and 25 per cent in the magistrates' courts. To stigmatise these acquittals as "blows" or "defeats" for the CPS and its director implies that it should be enough for a conviction that it or she has decided to prosecute. In such an attitude lies the seed of tyranny.

Yours faithfully,

PETER R. MORRELL,
JUDGES Chambers,
Crown and County Court,
Crown Buildings, Rivergate,
Peterborough, Cambridgeshire.
August 8.

From Mr Colin Slinn

Sir, The decision by Mr Justice McCullough not to allow the costs of the defendants acquitted in the match-rigging case (reports and leading article, August 9) would appear somewhat perverse.

It is true — as you quote Geoffrey Robertson, QC, as stating — that the trial judge has a discretion in relation to costs; however, this was a second trial for the accused. The jury in the first trial failed to reach a verdict and were discharged; it was then up to the Crown Prosecution Service to decide whether or not to put the same evidence to another jury in a new trial.

Having heard the defence evidence the prosecution still went ahead, presumably in the public interest, with the second trial, thus incurring further substantial sums of public money. Surely the costs of this second trial, which could have been avoided if the prosecution had so wished, should not be paid by those acquitted. This would seem to put a high price on justice.

Yours faithfully,

COLIN SLINN,
29 Bridge Park,
Rothsay, Bute, Strathclyde.
August 11.

Proper process of law

From Sir Anthony Grant

Sir, What business is it of the Prime Minister to order an investigation into the death of a Labour MP (report, August 4)?

The tragic death of Gordon McMaster, or anyone else in similar sad circumstances, is a matter for a fatal accident inquiry, should the local Procurator Fiscal's office call one and, if necessary, other courts.

Neither the Government nor Parliament should interfere with the proper process of law — nor pre-empt it — no matter how politically sensitive the issue.

Yours faithfully,

ANTHONY GRANT
(Conservative MP for
Cambridgeshire South West, 1983-97)
32 Beaufort Place,
Thompsons Lane, Cambridge.
August 5.

Computers for Africa

From Mr Richard Harris

Sir, May I take issue with two points in your report on the demonstration in Botswana by the inventor, Trevor Bayliss, of the Apple E Mate handheld laptop computer powered by clockwork (details, later editions, July 30)?

You say the computer crashed after 16 minutes. I wasn't there, but as a rule when this type of computer runs out of its main battery it simply sleeps until it gets more power and, unlike a normal laptop, you don't lose whatever you are currently working on.

Also, you say that this laptop costs about £2,000. The E Mate is not yet generally available in Britain, but can be bought in the United States for US\$600-700 (approximately £400). It was designed for the US education market, but its simplicity and ruggedness make it potentially ideal for the developing world. At £400 rather than £2,000 it becomes a much more realistic proposition.

I'm not an employee of Apple, just a long-time user and analyst of mobile computing, currently evaluating the Apple E Mate for use in African conservation projects — it looks ideal.

Regards,
RICHARD HARRIS,
5 Clovelly Park,
Hindhead, Surrey.
richard@tdv.com
August 4.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9KN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Mystery of the C.S. Lewis wardrobe

From Mr Christopher Whiteside

Sir, When the celestial copies of some of your recent issues arrived (Diary, July 28; letters, July 31 and August 4) I suspect Heaven's arches rang with the sound of C. S. Lewis roaring with laughter.

Those of your correspondents who have attempted to derive allegorical meanings, or explain the origin, of *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* should bear in mind the comments in Lewis's Christian writings, to the effect that everyone who tried to reconstruct the genesis of his books got it wrong.

Lewis used as an argument against liberal theologians who proposed allegorical reinterpretations of the Bible the contention that reviewers who employed similar techniques on the books published by himself and his friends (such as J. R. R. Tolkien) had "a record of one hundred per cent failure" (*Fern seed and Elephants*, Collins, 1975).

As he wrote to the *TLS* (November 28, 1958), much speculation in the study of literature "seems solid only because those who know the facts are dead and can't contradict it".

Yours sincerely,

CHRIS WHITESIDE,
41 Queens Crescent,
St Albans, Hertfordshire.
August 4.

From Mr Jonathan Brewer

Sir, C. S. Lewis had a lifelong love of the works of Edith Nesbit (1858-1924), paying tribute to her in his spiritual autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*, and writing to a young correspondent in 1957 that "I love Nesbit too and I think I have learned a lot from her about how to write stories of this kind".

Among the many correlations between the Nesbit children's canon and Lewis's Narnian chronicles are a talking lion, a silver chair, a boy called "Digory" [sic], a faun in the woods and pools between trees. There is even a magic wardrobe in Nesbit's *The Magic World*.

She [Anabel] went straight to the big wardrobe and turned its glass handle. "I expect it's only shelves and people's best hats," she said ...

Drink-drive penalties

From Mr E. S. Hooper

HM Coroner, South Yorkshire (East District)

Sir, Earlier this year I argued here (letter, January 7) that reducing the lawful blood/alcohol limit for motorists would be counterproductive, in that it would lead to a considerable reduction in public goodwill towards the police.

There is no substantive evidence that people are affected by 50mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood. The 30mg level was put into the Road Safety Act 1967 by Mrs Barbara Castle because at that concentration people begin to be affected.

With great respect to the Roads Minister, Baroness Hayman (report, August 6), the "hard core of offenders who are way over the [present] limit" are unlikely to stop drinking and driving because the lawful blood/alcohol limit is reduced to 30mg, the equivalent of one pint of beer — a proposal I do not remember seeing in Labour's general election manifesto.

They might stop if there were mandatory imprisonment for driving "way over the limit". Such imprisonment could be at weekends for those in employment.

I suggest a minimum of one week, or two weekends, for a first offender with 150mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood, with increments of three days

London's theatre

From Mr Richard C. Marshall

Sir, It is ironic that Mr Adrian Noble, artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, should accuse the Royal Opera House of making "the man on the Clapham omnibus" (Mr Noble's description) hostile towards the arts (report, August 4). Mr Noble himself has done much to antagonise the man on the Clapham omnibus, although passengers on the Newcastle and Plymouth omnibuses might be happier.

Since Mr Noble took over at the RSC, the company's activities at their London base at the Barbican have been reduced to a selection of their

Of course it wasn't hats. It was most amazingly, a crystal cave, very oddly shaped like a railway station ... and over the station clock was a full moon.

Lucy, in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, is clearly an echo of Anabel.

Yours sincerely,

JONATHAN BREWER,
5 Station Road, St Columb, Cornwall.

From the President of the Oxford C. S. Lewis Society

Sir, While some critics may find amusement in saying that C. S. Lewis's wardrobe is a womb symbol, neither I nor the Oxford C. S. Lewis Society have ever endorsed such a view, as your Diary incorrectly reported on July 28.

Create-a-theory scholarship is fun for those with Freudian inclinations; but we should spare even Liam Gallagher, who has revealed to your diarist that *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* is his "favourite book", the great womb farce.

Yours faithfully,

ANDREW P. CUNEO,
President,
Oxford C. S. Lewis Society,
Merton College, Oxford.
August 1.

From Mr Paul Barnetson

Sir, C. S. Lewis is reputed to have said that he got the idea for the wardrobe from the Victorian writer, George MacDonald (1824-1905).

Most people remember MacDonald for his children's fantasies, of which *The Princess and the Goblin* is best known; not so many realise that he wrote two excellent fantasy books for adults, *Phantastes* (1858) and *Lillith* (1895). I have an edition of both published by Victor Gollancz in 1962, with an introduction by Lewis.

Lillith contains a cupboard. When the owner enters it, and then leaves it again, he's somewhere else.

Womb indeed!

Yours sincerely,
PAUL BARNETSON,
22 Ferndale Road,
Chichester, West Sussex.
August 8.

or an extra weekend for every additional 25ml or part thereof.

Yours faithfully,

STANLEY HOOPER,
HM Coroner,
South Yorkshire (East District),
5 Union Street,
Doncaster, South Yorkshire.
August 6.

From Mr John Harthman

Sir, You report that Baroness Hayman says reducing the drink-drive limit was "certainly an option" because there is still "a hard core of offenders who are way over the [current] limit".

So once again, it seems, as with 22 pistol-shooters, the law-abiding majority are to have their freedoms curtailed because this Government cannot logically think through an argument, but wishes to be seen to react to public opinion.

Surely the answer to offenders who are "way over the limit" is to increase the penalties for severe breaches of the law and to target police activity on these hardcore offenders instead of harassing the seven out of eight motorists who, you report, were asked to take — and passed — breath tests in England and Wales last year.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN HARTHMAN,
42 Gisborne Road,
Sheffield, South Yorkshire.

In place of poetry

From Dr Naomi Lightman

Sir, William Rees-Mogg (article, August 4) extols the virtues of the recipe book of Annabella Blount, published in 1694. Had times been different he might have been able to extol her virtues as a poet.

As she herself tells us in *A Cure for Poetry*, although encouraged by her father to follow the Muses and herself longing for praise, she was persuaded by her brother not to employ her "wit/in many works for ladies' hands unfit ... but to turn her sense to housewife's wiser cares". Thereupon she "burned the trifling products" of her head and now "Where poets stood before, receipt [ie. recipe] books stand".

No doubt her brother considered that her marriage prospects would thereby be improved and there would be less risk of his having to support her financially as a blue-stocking spinster.

Yours faithfully,

NAOMI LIGHTMAN,
5b Prince Arthur Road, NW3.
August 4.

Worrying work

From Professor Gerald Goodhardt

Sir, Notices around the Elephant and Castle warn that the parking meters are "alarmed". Maybe they have heard about the "de-ranged" lawnmowers of Tonbridge (letter, August 12).

Yours faithfully,

G. J. GOODHARDT,
68 Hamilton Terrace, NW3.
g.j.goodhardt@city.ac.uk
August 12.

Will all radio one day be commercial? Siren voices lure more of the BBC's listeners

One of life's minor embarrassments is the press conference where there are no questions. Worse is the press conference where no journalists turn up at all, or where the two or three who do are outnumbered by those on the platform all dressed up for their "presentation" and smilingly eager to defend it.

The most obvious reason why silence greeted the call for questions at the quarterly results announcement last week of RAJAR, the agency which does joint research for commercial radio and the BBC, was numbing. The press had so burnt itself out on the subject of Radio 4 the previous week that statements about percentage points, proving this or that were about as welcome as a year's supply of tapes of *Thought for the Day*.

Another explanation for the "hacks' unresponsiveness was that the big news in the numbers — that the audience for Radio 1 has dropped below ten million for the first time in 30 years — has been utterly predictable since Chris Evans left in January. And the big question (well, someone did finally find voice to ask it, will Radio 4's shake-up of its schedules have the same damaging effect of driving away a loyal audience, is unanswerable. Not until the end of next year will there be even a glimpse of the audience's reaction.

Yet, when you think of it, silence means respect. That is the only appropriate reaction to a battery of statistics. Three months is a very short time in a life of a radio listener. Tiny quivers in RAJAR quarterly results keep both commercial and non-commercial sides of the industry awake at night for a very good reason. They may indicate seismic changes to come.

What to make of the RAJAR revelation that between the end of March and the end of June commercial radio took its highest-ever share of listeners? Its 50.2 per cent pushed the BBC to 47.4 per cent, well below the 50 per cent mark which the BBC feels can more comfortably justify its licence fee. One interpretation is that the BBC and commercial radio simply take turns hopping back and forth over the 50 per cent line. But looking back further, the graph of changes looks like one of those on the walls of boardrooms in *New Yorker* cartoons — straight down.

At the end of 1992 the BBC held 60 per cent of the national radio audience. If you're willing to go back to 1972, of course, you can get an even starker graph: BBC 100 per cent, advertising-supported radio, zero. It is not hard to foresee the day when the graph could be totally reversed and all radio becomes commercial radio.

But the British listener does not live in a *New Yorker* environment. There is a special pleasure — 75 years old, to judge from celebrations coming up — to be had from radio stations that do not take time out for commercials, singing or otherwise. And the BBC services that show extraordinary stability. Radios 3 and 4, are, unlike Radio 1, unduplicated on the other side. That Radio 3 has held steady at 5 per cent (of the audience over 15 that tunes in at least once a week) in the face of Classic FM's stronger appeal is proof of its strength. Classic FM, with double the reach, has the world's top favourites, but Radio 3 has the Proms.

Rivals could be creeping up on Radio 4's and Radio 5 Live's preserve of news and good talk. London News Radio is celebrating this week because the quarterly figures show that its reconstruction in the past year is paying off. Relaunching the old LBC and pairing it with a rolling-news station, News Direct, which gives news in sharp 15-minute segments, has worked very well. The company's new owners, including ITN, Reuters and the *Daily Mail*, have now put in a bid for the North West regional radio licence. If rolling-news does well against the London-orientated *Talk* day in London, how much better might it do in a region which does not like to be reminded of London all the time?

But these stations are local radio. Commercial radio's development has been just the opposite of the BBC's — local first, national later, much later. Commercial local radio now is clearly dominant over the BBC's variety, by 4:1. Does this mean that localism is the wave of the future? Probably not. It shows merely that local stations are cheap to start up and their advertisements are of interest to a locally minded audience.

The station to watch, in the light of the Radio 4 renovation, is Talk Radio. It is national and commercial and unlike the others of its kind — Classic Virgin and Atlantic 252 — is devoted to interesting talk, not music. RAJAR shows that its listeners (2.2 million a week) stay tuned longer than to the other commercial national.

So the BBC is right to be worried about national commercial competition — even if the radical remedies to which it seems addicted are the wrong ones. The BBC has the reputation and the resources for its national radio networks to hold onto the legacy of the monopoly years for a long time.

The British listener is a very conservative creature. It changes its habits very slowly, even when young. The 9.7 million a week still tuning to Radio 1, even without Chris Evans, prove it.



BRENDA MADDOX

The Client's Story



Younger women wonder whether it is safe for them to wear a Tampax overnight

TAMPAX

THE CLIENT: Magdalena Teare, 33, Marketing Director UK and Ireland, Tambrands Ltd.

WHAT OTHER CAMPAIGNS HAVE YOU BOUGHT? I am from Sweden. I have worked on Croft Sherry and Häagen-Dazs ice cream in this country.

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THE AGENCY: FCB

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WAS IT EXPENSIVE? It cost £100,000. Very fair.

AT WHOM IS IT AIMED? Younger women, 19 to 34. That's when you make up your mind and become brand loyal.

WHAT'S THE STRATEGY? We realised that the toxic shock scare was growing in people's minds. It wasn't enough to say we have confidence in our product.

AH, SO IT'S ALL ABOUT TOXIC SHOCK? Yes. Consumers had this nagging thought. We decided it was important enough to change everything: our packaging, leaflets, our educational programmes.

WEREN'T YOU WORRIED ABOUT SOUNDING PATRONISING? No. We

did a lot of research — five focus groups. Five hundred women looked at the ads, and we talk to 4,000 women every year.

BUT AREN'T YOU TELLING WOMEN WHAT THEY ALREADY KNOW? No. We have two different types of consumers. Older women who are settled in their habits use the product overnight and don't even think about it, but women of 19-22 grew up during the toxic shock scare, and have felt confused and misinformed.

DO YOU LOOK AT OTHER IDEAS? We did try Dawn French. Younger women liked her but it didn't work for all ages.

WHAT SOLD THIS SCRIPT TO YOU? The absolute tone of voice. Really young women could relate to the women asking the questions — I'm not alone in this worry. Older women relate to the women with the answers.

WHAT'S THE BEST CAMPAIGN YOU'VE EVER BOUGHT? This is looking like it. Tampax has struggled because of health concerns. We had to face that. We used to use glamorous women. This is a complete U-turn. That's why it's making such an impact.

AND THE WORST? The previous Tampax campaign. *Body Language*. It was awful. It completely missed the way. It showed beautiful, skinny women running around the beach and the street. It provoked us to rethink.

DAVID MCGRATH

Political ads lack fizz

Election ads were tame and forgettable, says David McGrath

SPOT the odd man out. New Labour. The Tories. Orange Tango. The answer, of course, is Orange Tango. It's the only one whose ads you can still remember 100 days after they ran.

Think about it. Millions of pounds later, how many of those posters and party political broadcasts that ran over the past three years can you actually remember? Er, the red eyes. Good. But who were they for? Em, the Tories? Correct, well remembered (although MORI research at the time suggested that 4 out of 5 people were less likely to vote Tory as a result of seeing this ad).

Any more? Remember, we're talking about £40 million in advertising here. Give up? What about the Tory lion with the red tear in his eye? (Unfortunately, DISM research concluded that most people thought it was for Labour.) Tony and John as Punch & Judy for the Lib Dems. "17 years under the Tories. Enough is Enough". "New Labour, new taxes". And on and on.

According to estimates, new Labour spent £26 million to get elected, £13 million of it in the past 12 months, at a cost of £1.95 a vote. The Tories spent £20 million in the past 12 months alone — more than £2 for each vote. Tango spends about £10 million a year.

Why are the parties so hopeless at using the skills of the ad agencies to promote themselves? Dominic Field, business director on the Tango account at HHCL, says: "I suspect, as with all big corporations, the problem is they find it hard to agree what they stand for."

Once Tango hit upon "You know when you've been Tango'd" six years ago they stuck with it. All successful campaigns do the same.

Chris Powell, chief executive of Labour's agency DDB/BMP, agrees: "The Tories were veering all over the place." But he refuses to concede that Labour suffered the same problem. "Our strategy was boringly consistent. We went on and on about tax. An insider at M&C Saatchi, who spent the Tory millions, confessed the strategy had been inconsistent: 'I can't say anything but I could nod my head if you were here'."

Look at the campaigns that might have run. A poster showing those demon eyes staring out of Blair's mouth with the caption "What lies behind the smile?" You'd still remember that 100 days later — but it was ditched on the grounds of taste.

Then there was the series of Labour posters featuring drawings of John Major based on the Mr Men cartoons. Despite favourable research, the campaign was cancelled.

The net result? Millions of pounds of party funds squandered on barely forgettable, brightly coloured posters like "More jobs for young people" and "Britain deserves better".

Will the lessons ever be learnt? Not according to Nicole Kleiman, account manager on the Labour account. "Labour are not like other advertisers, they're a political party. They're not interested in testing ads. They are more interested in seeing people's reactions to news stories." Asked to comment on Tory research, the Saatchi source whispered: "A. I can't and B. I won't."

At least there are some signs that Labour seems to be thinking ahead. They've launched their summer slogan, "Modern, strong & fair". Hmmm. Think we'll remember that, 100 days from now?

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A word from the mother of all mothers

US agony aunt Dr Laura Schlessinger is heading for London, reports Giles Whittell

Snivellers, slackers, adulterers and neglectful parents, brace yourselves or turn off your radios. Dr Laura Schlessinger, America's favourite radio schoolmarm, wants to begin broadcasting in London. She is negotiating with several stations, her handlers say, and her daily blitz on the morals of her callers is expected to hit the capital's airwaves in the autumn.

But no London stations are admitting it. Talks with Capital Radio have so far proved inconclusive and LBC has not been approached. Anyway, how Dr Schlessinger would be received by Londoners is open to question.

Here in America she was in action last week talking to "Elizabeth", a caller to her show in Los Angeles who confessed to harbouring "an extreme amount of hatred for a woman who had an affair with my husband".

Dr Schlessinger scots in: "What she did was extremely slimy and creepy. But what your husband did was unbelievable. He was the one who was willing to destroy his family for some fun."

Dr Schlessinger: "You want to give her capital punishment, right?"

Elizabeth: "Yeah."

Dr Schlessinger: "Then your husband should die first."

In the dysfunctional family of American talk show hosts, Dr Laura, as she likes to be called, has cast herself as the mother of all mothers. She brings impressive credentials to her job: a psychology Ph.D., a post-doctoral certificate in marriage and family counselling and 12 years' private practice as a therapist. But she wears them lightly. In her boiled-down value system, children's needs, especially the intactness of their parents' marriage, are paramount. Last year *Forbes* magazine summed up Dr Schlessinger's rules of thumb: "Premarital sex? Better have a ring and a wedding date first. Divorce? Not when there are children. Abortion? Only if the mother's life is threatened. Adultery? Read the Ten Commandments."

Plenty of American talk shows are peddling similarly

old-fashioned prescriptions for personal improvement because they often make sense and they do wonders for ratings. Dr Schlessinger differs in steering clear of politics and daring to give instant solutions to the toughest, most personal dilemmas drivetime radio can serve up.

One example: a couple want kids, but both are working and neither can afford to quit. "Don't have children if you're not going to take care of them. Get a parakeet and put a towel over the cage instead."

Simple. And great radio. The Dr Schlessinger show is carried by more than 400 stations across North America, drawing 18 million listeners a week and 50,000 callers per programme. In terms of ratings she is the number two radio personality in the US, trailing Rush Limbaugh, and number one in Canada. She has squeezed Oliver

North from the prime evening drivetime slot in his home market of Washington, DC, and has expanded her radio success into a lucrative multi-media empire.

Her books, *Ten Stupid Things Women Do To Mess Up Their Lives* and *How Could You Do That?*, have both been New York Times bestsellers. The same fate doubtless awaits *Ten Stupid Things Men Do To Mess Up Their Lives*, due out in September.

Her columns are syndicated to 55 newspapers. Her fans wear Dr Laura hats and T-shirts. Her monthly newsletter can be had for \$39.95 (about £25) a year. She made \$7 million (about £4.3 million) last year.

Dr Schlessinger does not believe in self-esteem. She

thinks generations of Americans have been dangerously misled into thinking it is right to base important decisions on feelings rather than morals. She has clearly struck a chord.

But in creating her personality cult she has been ably assisted by the rest of the media. Dr Schlessinger has had an exceptionally easy ride from American interviewers.

She is "the chief moral arbiter of the Nineties", writes a columnist in *The Globe and Mail*, Toronto. Debra Brendis gushes in *The Christian Century* that Dr Schlessinger delivers a shot of "moral adrenaline". Yet another profiler calls her "almost sinfully good-looking".

Dr Schlessinger is actually on the scrawny side of petite, with a blonde bob, a dentally correct smile and a fondness for thick make-up. Physically, the most impressive thing about her is a black belt in karate.

Whether her show will travel to London has radio insiders excited. A spokeswoman for Talk Radio, a national station, said that any approach from Dr Schlessinger would be welcome and that she might even be offered a seat next to James

Whale, one of its current hosts. Charles Golding, controller of programmes for LBC, said he would like to meet her, but probably would not buy her show. "It's the accent," he says.

Dr Schlessinger's camp is so far unsure whether her programme should be broadcast live here.

But the Americans may already be ahead of themselves. It remains to be seen if Londoners will throw themselves into Dr Schlessinger's shock therapy with the self-flagellatory zeal of their transatlantic cousins. They might just listen quietly, bemused, phone firmly off the hook.

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Agony aunt Dr Laura Schlessinger — "the chief moral arbiter of the Nineties"

THE LISTENER

THE NEWS BEHIND THE HEADLINES

Hack's hackles rise

THE Foreign Office could be facing mutiny over a recent decision to award a contract to an American-owned media company. The deal, to produce a series of weekly Foreign Office radio programmes for global distribution, went to Worldwide Television News. WTN beat, among other bidders, the Central Office of Information, which has run the service for 30 years.

WTN's first move was to slash the existing freelance journalists' fee of £55 an interview to £10 an hour, including travel. The hacks, who have worked on the series for years, were told to expect no more than £30 an interview in future. Many have already left in disgust.

But a WTN spokesman insisted: "There's no shortage of people willing to work for £10 an hour." An FCO official was bemused. "Paying by the hour is something we haven't come across before. We will be monitoring WTN's output carefully."

Spiky women

IRREGULAR goes on at *Maxim*, the magazine for men, where staff have hit on

ioned newspaper spike, sits in the newsroom and each time someone sees a picture of a model they fancy they spear it on the spike. At the end of the month the woman with most appearances is picked.

The *Listener* hopes the practice was not invented by *Maxim's* owner, the hippy media tycoon Felix Dennis, who admits to having a harem of women, but is unable to choose between them.



D'Argy Smith: temptation?

Marcelle's return

IS Marcelle D'Argy Smith about to be tempted back into the rancorous world of women's magazines? Rumours are gathering pace that the former editor of *Cosmopolitan* is being courted to edit the more sedate *Woman's Journal*. Inquiries to the office are met with a sharp intake of breath. "It is definitely a rumour but at the moment we don't know what's happening," said one insider. "Will you let us know if you find out?"

First-name terms

AWARD for silliest question of the week goes to Kim Sengupta. *The Independent's* suave reporter who followed the trip of Diana, Princess of Wales, to Bosnia. Reporters were told at a briefing that the family of a girl being visited by the Princess were Muslims. "Yes, but what are their Christian names?" piped up Sengupta. He was ignored by the aid worker but not by his fellow journalists, who teased him mercilessly for the rest of the trip.



Dennis: too much choice

a novel method of selecting cover models. A device known as the Tony Spike has been introduced. The instrument, an old-fash-

HOW WILL THE BRITISH TAKE DR LAURA'S ADVICE?

CLAIRE RAYNER, broadcaster, agony aunt and author: "I find it a bit disturbing when adults need a schoolmistress figure to wrap them over the knuckles with her cane. The public may like her, but I suspect they'll fall about laughing without her knowing why."

OLIVER JAMES, clinical psychologist and broadcaster: "People respond to clear, unequivocal instructions, as opposed to advice. It is sometimes dangerous to give advice without understanding the full context of a person's problems, but her brand of certainty-through-simplicity is bound to score points."

VIRGINIA IRONSIDE, agony aunt and author: "I wouldn't phone her as I'd be

terrified about what she would say. I don't feel sorry for people who ring because they know what they are going to get.

"We've all spent so long blaming people's problems on low self-esteem, their childhood or their fathers and mothers. Dr Schlessinger's usual advice to 'buck up and get on with it' is sometimes best."

ZELDA WEST-MEADS, Relate marriage counsellor, psychosexual therapist and *Mail on Sunday* agony aunt: "Many people who seek advice want to be given quick answers and told what to do when it is often more productive to get people to think things through for themselves."

PETER FOSTER

Diana: mover and shaker

The answer to both questions is yes, she does. Yes, stories about Diana, Princess of Wales, really do move newspapers off the newsagents' shelves — and, yes, they do damage the standing of the monarchy. At least 750,000 extra national newspapers have been sold on the three days that exclusive photographs of the Princess with Dodi Fayed have appeared in *The Mail on Sunday* (twice), *Sunday Mirror*, *The Sun* and *Daily Mail*. No other person on earth, as *The Sun's* Editor Stuart Higgins says, excites the interest of readers as much: "There is an absolute fascination with her that never wanes from our readers' point of view." He ought to know: sales of *The Sun* rose by 175,000 on Monday when it published seven pages of the Diana-Dodi pictures.

August is a wicked month for the embattled circulation directors of the three mass-market national tabloids. Year on year their sales in July were down by 290,000. With millions of buyers abroad on holiday, sales usually dip still further in August, even though the start of the soccer season offers some consolation. Yet so far this August the summer slump has failed to occur.

The Princess has been particularly significant in the developing battle for supremacy between *The Mail on Sunday* and the *Sunday Mirror*. Just as broadsheets only exceptionally outsell any of the tabloids, so middle-mar-



PAPER ROUND Brian MacArthur

ket tabloids — the *Mail* and *Express* — only rarely outsell the red tops (although the upmarket *Sunday Times* outsells the mid-market *Express* on Sunday and *The Mail on Sunday* outsells *The People*).

Now *The Mail on Sunday* has the *Sunday Mirror* in its sights — and when its You

magazine published a special souvenir issue on the sale of her dresses on August 2, sales were boosted by 176,000 to a record 2,313,000, about 75,000 ahead of average sales of the *Sunday Mirror* in July.

That success was undoubtedly the motive for the Mirror Group's determination to win the frenzied battle for the pictures of the Princess with Fayed and to publish them not in the daily but the Sunday paper where they helped to overcome any instant effect of a simultaneous 5p price increase.

The result was stunning. Its scoop, headlined "The Kiss", showed the Princess for the first time in an apparent clinch with Fayed and was followed by another ten pages

day morning went to the *Daily Mail*, which published eight pages of pictures and commentary and achieved a sales boost of about 35,000. The *Daily Mail* now has the *Daily Mirror* in its sights: *The Mirror* is only 113,000 ahead.

On Monday, beaten by its Sunday sister, *The Mirror* wrapped its front page with a lottery giveaway, declared the real front page Diana-free, devoted it to a thalidomide

story, and got no increase on sales.

Yet the obsession with the Royal Family, not only with the Princess but also with the relationship between the Prince of Wales and Camilla Parker Bowles and the question of whether they should marry, has an inevitable effect on public opinion, as polls by *The Guardian* and *The Sun* demonstrated. In a MORI poll for *The Sun*, a majority thought the Princess should be free to choose her friends and that the Prince and Mrs Parker Bowles should get married, live at Buckingham Palace, Charles become King but, overwhelmingly, that Mrs Parker Bowles should not be Queen.

More ominously, an ICM poll for *The Guardian* showed that support for the Royal Family has slumped below 50 per cent for the first time, with the over-65s the only age group where a majority believes Britain would be worse off without them.

An accompanying leading article in *The Guardian*, headlined "The People's Revolt", argued for the first time in any national daily that British monarchy was quite literally dying. "It is time for Britain's conviction republicans to abandon the political cosset and make their strongest case; our poll shows they have a ready following."

Shifts of opinion of momentous proportions often go unnoticed. That leading article, in the paper most associated with the ambitions of new Labour, may be one.

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Antiquated formula proving hard to digest

BY ERIC REGULY

READER'S DIGEST, the most widely read magazine in the world, has always been a master of condensation. Editors seamlessly reduced whole books to a few pages. In a country famous for its inhabitants, this formula, combined with "God-Country-Family" values, worked beautifully and fortunes rolled in decade after decade.

In recent years, the company has become expert at another form of condensation — that of profits. Since 1994, earnings and revenues have been in free fall, taking the shares down with them. With the market valuation halved, angry investors have been calling for a shake-up.

Earlier this week, a month after the Reader's Digest organisation cut its quarterly dividend by 50 per cent, James Schadt resigned as chairman and chief executive. His departure was "mutually agreed" and he has been replaced temporarily by George Grune, the former Marine who retired as chairman in 1995, while headhunters find a replacement.

The shares duly rose more than \$3 to \$28 (10p.50), but Wall Street is not convinced the worst is over. Karen Ficker, an analyst with Funnell Selz in Manhattan, said: "We've been frustrated for more than a year over management's inability to turn the company around."

Reader's Digest

The organisation's problems are further evidence that even the mighty can fall. Dow Jones, owner of *The Wall Street Journal*, another famous name in American publishing, is going through a similar crisis.

Reader's Digest is the victim of demographics — its geriatric readership profile means it

must recruit some 5 million new readers a year just to maintain its circulation of 37.5 million. Intense competition and ageing inability to change with the times. In the era of the Democrats, the magazine still runs articles such as "Must our prisons be resorts?" and "What health care crisis?", as well as timeless, syrupy features like "Un-

forgettable Shirley Temple". The rest of the empire is not faring well either. Its much larger direct-mail business, which sells books, videos and CDs, has stalled and analysts say the company has done little to exploit its international database of 100 million names, an asset that any large retailer would find invaluable.

There was a time when *Reader's Digest* paid little attention to profitability. Founded in 1922 with a \$600 investment, *Reader's Digest* treated its employees well and gave away most of its money. Employees were driven to work in company buses and did not have to work on Fridays in May so that gardeners could be tended. The headquarters, in Chappaqua, New York, are still decorated

with Chagalls and Matisse in what has been called the corporate world's finest collection of Impressionist art.

Two charitable trusts control the company — non-voting shares were sold to the public in 1990 — and institutions such as the Lincoln Center in New York and the Bronx Zoo have been the recipients of hundreds of millions of dollars.

Reader's Digest is an old business with old ideas. But it remains one of the world's best-known brand names and its international reach is impressive. Almost half of its sales are in Europe. Unless the company can find an executive team to rejuvenate the business, *Reader's Digest* risks becoming a quaint relic of the 20th century.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Alpha Airports names chief executive

ALPHA AIRPORTS, the duty free shops and air catering group part owned by Mohamed Al Fayed, has at last found a replacement for Paul Harrison, the chief executive who quit in April. Kevin Abbot, a director of Rexam, will take on the role from October 1. Mr Abbot, 43, has worked at Rexam since 1994, initially running international packaging and then global food and beverages packaging. He earlier spent 16 years at Redland, where he was a main board director from 1988 to 1994.

Rodney Galpin, chairman of Alpha Airports, said that Mr Abbot was selected because of his background in marketing and his knowledge, through Redland, of Asian markets.

Sweet smell of success

ESTÉE LAUDER, the cosmetics and fragrances company, reported higher earnings for the fourth quarter and full fiscal year, citing strong sales in all of its brands. For the year to June 30, sales rose 6 per cent, to \$3.4 billion (£2 billion) from \$3.2 billion last time. Excluding the impact of foreign currency translation, net sales increased 9 per cent during the year. Earnings rose to \$197.6 million, or \$1.46 a share, from \$102.9 million. Comparable per-share figures were not available, as the company went public in November 1995.

Lloyd's conversion plan

STACE BARR, the Lloyd's members agency, yesterday issued the prospectus for its plan to convert traditional names to limited liability underwriting. Under the scheme, developed with the Angerstein Lloyd's fund, names will hold shares in a new underwriting vehicle after giving over their rights to participate on syndicates. Names will make their funds at Lloyd's available for continued underwriting, while Angerstein will make money available to meet a change in capital requirements at the insurance market.

Easynet confident

EASYNET, Britain's second-largest Internet access provider, has said it will break into profit in the last three months of the year, after generating a portfolio of high-paying business customers. The company, which has been in the red since its inception three years ago, failed to stem interim losses in the first six months of the year with a pre-tax loss of £724,000 (£727,000) on sales that grew from £2.48 million to £1.53 million. Its shares, which joined the Alternative Investment Market at 97p in March last year, fell 42p to 70p.

Saracen approached

SARACEN VALUE, the smaller companies investment trust, yesterday said it had been approached by fund managers wanting to oust the current team. The Saracen board on Monday met HSBC Asset Management, which claims to have the support of 50 per cent of Saracen shareholders for its bid to replace SFM, which has been running the trust since 1994. Saracen said: "The HSBC UK Smaller Companies unit trust has been in existence for nine months and we are concerned that this is a short period in which to judge a fund manager's ability."

Apple expecting loss

APPLE COMPUTER, in which Microsoft is investing \$150 million (£94 million), expects to report another loss for the fiscal fourth quarter ending in September, and said sales for the period will be lower than a year ago. Apple "does not believe it will return to profitability in the fourth quarter", the company disclosed in a filing on Monday with the Securities and Exchange Commission. "The company believes that net sales will be below the prior year's comparable periods through at least the first quarter of 1998, if not longer."

Epwin turnover up 27%

EPWIN, the building products group that specialises in window installations, lifted pre-tax profits by 14.5 per cent in the six months to June 28, from £2 million to £2.3 million, on turnover of £43.6 million, up 27 per cent from £34.3 million. Earnings per share were up 15 per cent, from 6p to 6.9p. An interim dividend of 3.15p (2.9p) will be paid on October 13. The company, which has made four acquisitions in the past year for a total of £6 million, says that it is now ready to increase its market share.

NBS mutuality package

NEWCASTLE BUILDING SOCIETY's pre-tax profits fell from £4.6 million to £3.5 million for the first half of this year because of the society's mutual benefits package. Bill Midgley, chief executive, said: "Around £740,000 was awarded to borrowers who qualified under the loyalty bonus schemes and investors, both existing and new, who benefit from the society's interest rate structure. If we had maintained the same margin as the average converting society of 1.8 per cent, profits would have risen by 40 per cent."

TOURIST RATES

Bank	Bank	Bank	Bank
Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell
Australia \$...	2.25	Malta	0.670
Austria Sch ...	21.67	Netherlands Gld	3.250
Belgium Fr ...	62.88	New Zealand \$	2.23
Canada \$...	62.88	Norway Kr ...	12.89
Cyprus Cyp ...	0.807	Portugal Esc ...	306.59
Denmark Kr ...	11.78	S Africa Rd ...	8.08
Finland Mk ...	9.33	Spain Ptas ...	252.29
France F ...	16.37	Sweden Kr ...	13.45
Germany DM ...	9.10	Switzerland Fr ...	2.16
Greece Dr ...	488	Turkey Lira ...	289.59
Hong S ...	12.02	USA \$...	1.685
Iceland ...	127		
Ireland P ...	1.16		
Israel Shtk ...	5.90		
Italy Lira ...	3043		
Japan Yen ...	198.23		

Rates for small denomination notes supplied by Barclays Bank. Other rates apply to traveler's cheques. Rates for 100,000 Japanese yen.

160.70

Healthcare cuts knock Smith & Nephew

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

CUTS in government spending on healthcare across Europe are hitting Smith & Nephew, which is also continuing to feel the impact of the strong pound.

The company, which makes Elastioplast plasters, skin products, artificial knees and keyhole surgery equipment, said that sales on the Continent were flat in the first half as Germany, France and Italy curbed health spending as part of their drive to qualify for European monetary union. A year ago, European sales showed a 9 per cent rise.

Chris O'Donnell, chief executive, said he expected to see a slight improvement in European sales in the second half. The strong pound knocked

£11 million from profits in the first half and will have a similar effect in the second half of the year. As a result, in the six months to June 28, pre-tax profit was £31.1 million, compared with £91.9 million a year ago. At constant exchange rates, underlying sales were up 5 per cent.

Analysts said that pharmaceutical companies were being hit less hard by the healthcare budget cuts in Europe as hospitals were bearing the brunt of the cuts. That meant sales of products such as artificial limbs were being affected rather than those of drugs, which were supplied mainly by general practitioners whose budgets were, as yet, relatively untouched.

Sales in America, which were down 3 per cent a year ago because of pricing pressures from powerful hospital groups, have shown signs of recovery. Sales were down 1 per cent in the first half, but were now "trending upwards", Mr O'Donnell said. The company is attempting to bring in selective price rises, but it is not yet sure whether they will stick. At present the US accounts for 40 per cent of group earnings, but that proportion could rise with the launch of Dermagraft, a new treatment for food ulcers suffered by diabetics.

It is still waiting for Food and Drug Administration approval for Dermagraft. Mr O'Donnell said that Dermagraft would cost the company £6 million in total this year to develop. Its launch in the UK is scheduled in October and the company is hoping for worldwide sales of £150 million in 2001.

Mr O'Donnell said that Smith & Nephew was continuing to look for acquisition opportunities and could spend up to £300 million on a single purchase. Any large acquisition would probably be in the UK, US or Europe and would be in the orthopaedic, keyhole surgery or wound-treatment areas. He declined to discuss speculation that the company had approached Roche, the Swiss pharmaceuticals group, to buy DePuy, the artificial limb maker.

Adjusted earnings per share in the first half were 5.42p (5.08p). The company will pay a 2.4p foreign income dividend (2.24p) on December 10.

Tempus, page 26



Brick by brick: Barbara Moorhouse, finance director, and John Morgan, chief executive of Morgan Sindall, the construction group, which yesterday reported a 48 per cent jump in pre-tax profits for

the six months to June 30, from £2.22 million to £3.28 million. Turnover rose 43.6 per cent, from £12.7 million to £161.9 million, and earnings per share rose 29 per cent, from 5.52p to 7.12p. The

company blamed problems with its refurbishing business on over-expansion. The business has been refocused at a cost of about £500,000. A dividend of 1.67p, compared with 1.35p, is due on October 1

BOC profits hit by strength of pound

BY PAUL DURMAN

BOC GROUP, the gases company that recently put its healthcare business up for sale, yesterday became the latest victim of the strong pound, reporting a small fall in its nine months' profits.

Although underlying sales rose 5 per cent and pre-tax profits by 0 per cent, the sterling impact cut the reported total from £327.3 million to £325.4 million. Sales in the nine months to June 30 fell by £75 million to £2.92 billion. BOC's shares slipped 25p to 1145p.

The company estimated that sterling had cost it about £33 million in lost profits, £20 million of this because of the

translation of overseas earnings. Tony Isaac, finance director, suggested the total full-year cost could rise to nearly £57 million.

Danny Rosenkranz, chief executive, said BOC was seeing a lot of interest in Ohmeda, the healthcare business based around anaesthetic gases and equipment. BOC expects to receive preliminary bids around the end of this month, and hopes to complete the sale by Christmas.

The business contributed £35.2 million, a 2 per cent decline excluding currencies. Profits from medical devices were also damaged by exchange rate movements.

Celtic consoles fans with City success

BY CHRIS AYRES

CELTIC Football Club might have disappointed in the Scottish Premier League last season, but its performance in the City will have given consolation to fans who are investors.

In the year to June, Celtic turned a pre-tax loss of £1 million into a profit of £5.1 million on turnover of £22.2 million, up nearly 40 per cent from £16 million in the previous period. Earnings per share were £15.93 — compared to a loss of £3.49 — although investors will still not be paid a dividend.

Fergus McCann, chairman of Celtic, reassured fans that the club's profits would be invested in new players. "Foot-

ball success will come hand in hand with our success as a business," he said. His promise was immediately followed by the purchase of Regi Blinker from Sheffield Wednesday for £4.5 million.

The club also reported that attendances rose 37 per cent to almost 1.7 million last year, with sales of season tickets staying the highest at any British club.

Celtic's merchandising sales also continued to grow, reflecting the club's recent three-year sponsorship deal with Umbro. Celtic is now planning to build a retail megastore alongside a Celtic museum and visitors' centre.

Bula investor calls for inquiry

FROM EILEEN MCCABE IN DUBLIN

A SHAREHOLDER of Bula Resources, the troubled Irish exploration company, yesterday called for its affairs to be investigated after a series of disastrous escapades in Russia.

She, along with several other shareholders at the company's packed annual general meeting in a Dublin hotel, demanded that board members vigorously pursue their investigations into the multimillion pound losses suffered by

the company as a result of its Russian deals. Earlier, Tom Fitzpatrick, Bula's chairman, told shareholders that the company had submitted a £120 million (£8.5 million) claim against Gouldens, the London solicitors, which advised the company on its failed transaction with AK-Oil, the Russian group, in 1994. Gouldens has been invited to respond by August 29 after which Bula says legal proceedings will start in London.

He also revealed that the board has still not managed to discover the identity of the beneficial owner of the Mir Oil

company, with which Bula agreed to develop the controversial Salymyskoye oilfield in Russia in 1995. Mr Fitzpatrick said that at the time of the deal, Jim Stanley, then Bula's chairman and chief executive, gave written confirmation that he or no party connected with him had any interest in Mir.

So far Bula has discovered that a South African resident who was named as the owner of Mir at the time of the deal is no longer the owner. Investigations are continuing, he said. Glowing test results at Salymyskoye were also found to be incorrect.

"Would I ever have you? I had so little to offer. Yet it was enough."



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Unpopular Pitcher struck out



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

So, farewell then, Sir Des. Yesterday, the ubiquitous Mr Mersey-side lost his battle to hang onto power and by the autumn he will be out of the boardroom of the haplessly named United Utilities. Single-handedly, he has done more to put a stop to the coupling of the roles of chairman and chief executive than all the committees on corporate governance combined.

Sir Desmond does not believe in power sharing but institutional investors do. They are unhappy with the notion that one man can determine the shape of a company's strategy and preside over its implementation, particularly when he presides as Sir Des does, with an arrogant disregard for the opinions of others.

In theory, a contingent of strong non-executive directors should be able to keep a strong corporate boss in check. But clearly this had not been the case at United Utilities, where it was only after shareholder discontent over the running of the company reached screaming pitch that Sir Peter Middleton and his colleagues were spurred into action. Even seasoned corporate operators may have quaked at the prospect of going into battle against Sir Desmond, although the imminent arrival of British Aerospace's punchy Sir Dick Evans on the United Utilities board might have provided some interesting confrontations.

They will not be necessary now, since the headhunters are about to go searching for a new, and non-executive chairman for the company. But the unsavoury episode will certainly have ensured that investors step up their objections to a concentration of power in a single being.

Sir Ronald Hampel and his colleagues chose not to outlaw the idea of a combined chairman and chief executive. Instead, they called for the appointment of a tough independent non-executive director to be the voice of investors. What the United Utilities case indicates is that investors can be driven into exercising those vocal chords and, when they do, they demand that the roles be split.

Not all those who currently combine the chairman and chief executive roles exhibit megalomaniac tendencies, but however well behaved and effective they may be, they are likely to be the last of the line. If they wish to avoid controversy, they may already be planning sensible statements on the subject of succession, for in many cases these individuals are so closely identified with the success of their companies that there are legitimate concerns as to how the

business will cope without them. John Rithblat at British Land, Sir Richard Greenbury at Marks & Spencer and Garry Weston at Associated British Foods have all served shareholders with style. They are not in the habit of losing top managers with the unerring speed that Sir Desmond did. But they would each do well to think of which two individuals could best step into the single pair of shoes that they will one day have to vacate.

Inflation deduction with touch of Alice

Surprise was the element missing from the inflation figures yesterday. Unseasonably high prices for vegetables and rising petrol prices may have contributed to a slight increase in the headline figure but, thanks to the Bank of England's monetary policy committee, we know there is nothing to fear.

Last week the MPC performed the impressive verbal feat of talking down the pound by indicating its confidence that the economy had been brought back into line and more interest rate increases would be unnecessary in the short term. We can safely assume that this opinion was based on advance warning of the picture that we were all allowed to see yesterday, and a peek at the Bank's inflation report which is about to be made public.

Just what the figures really mean depends on which set you choose to peer at most closely. Ironically, the headline figure of 3.3 per cent is swollen as a result of those measures that the Chancellor introduced to stop the spending boom and quell a potential hike in inflation. Alice in Wonderland herself might have spotted something awry here. So, on to what is known as RPI, which strips out the excise increases and produces a July figure unchanged on June.

Blame the weather for smudging the figures and strip out unseasonal food price increases, and it is possible to argue that inflation was actually marginally lower last month.

At this point, however, Alice might begin to think that inflation could vanish, like the Cheshire cat's smile, if one chose to ignore everything that had risen in price. On balance, the message in the figures is that inflation is under control. And away from the governmental calculators, that is also the conclusion. In the high street there is no evidence of windfall spending pushing up prices, albeit that it is bringing retailers some welcome extra business. This week's figures from manufacturing indicated that there is no upward pressure on prices coming from that direction, with raw material costs falling significantly over the past month.

It is enough to make Alice wonder whether the MPC

needed that last hike in interest rates. It will penalise industry, which needs to invest, and which is already bemoaning the agonies of the strong pound. But consolation comes from the fact that at least it was only a quarter of a per cent, and not the full point or more suggested by those who wanted drastic action from the newly independent Bank.

Borrower beware — buyer beware

Legislation will never be able to prevent some people borrowing more than they can afford. When the culprits are would-be property moguls, they are merely gearing up, and if they go bust the chances are that they will be back to ask another banker for help before long. But when the borrowers are individuals aiming to survive rather than make a fortune, the consequences of overborrowing can be personal catastrophe.

Most lenders are aware of this simple truth. While they could take refuge in the *caveat emptor* approach to business, they try to tread a careful line between what people want to borrow and what

they can afford to borrow. After all, there is little point in shovelling out the cash unless you will be able to pull it back, complete with interest.

But it remains the case that many personal borrowers remain oblivious to the level of interest that will be charged, their concern being only to get their hands on the money they need. Thus it is that lenders serving the most disadvantaged sections of society charge the highest rates of interest.

Yesterday, one of these companies — truly the lender of the last resort — said it would review its entire loan portfolio.

If it has a view to ever recovering the loans, it may find some nasty surprises in its researches. But the likelihood is that it has already pocketed a profit by selling on those loans to another institution. *Caveat emptor*, as they say.

Gnomes of UBS

FRESH from his victory in persuading Credit Suisse to merge with Winterthur, Martin Ebner is renewing his attack on UBS. The Swiss bank has successfully kept him at bay for three years, but he is not one to give up. His "summer vision" for Winterthur having been accomplished, the UBS gnomes may feel they need to treat him a little more tactfully. Any ideas for carefully watering down his stake would be courting danger.

General Accident boosted by Provident deal

By GAVIN LUMSDEN

GENERAL ACCIDENT, the composite insurer, announced a 35 per cent leap in interim pre-tax profits to a record £260 million yesterday as last year's acquisition of Provident Mutual boosted an already strong performance in the UK.

The addition of Provident Mutual, a Scottish pensions company, increased life and pensions sales by 19 per cent to £105 million while profits rose 37 per cent to £63 million.

On general insurance, GA is the first UK player to declare an underwriting profit this year, up £8 million to £19 million on slightly reduced premiums of £771 million. While home and property cover delivered growing profits, and its Lloyd's marine business broke even, losses from motor insurance increased as claims and low-cost competition surged.

Bob Scott, group chief executive, praised the UK results in the context of universal competition. "It used to be the case that one area would balance out another. Now all our business units are reporting increased competition."

Worldwide general premiums fell £20 million to £2.21 billion as a result. The company is making 600 staff redundant in the US where losses fell back to \$79 million. Corrective action in Canada,



Bob Scott said GA faced competition in every area

including withdrawing sewerage coverage in Ontario, reduced losses to \$26 million. The company has withdrawn its personal business in Denmark and The Netherlands and is reviewing its position in other countries after incurring a £20 million loss in Europe. Realised investment gains more than doubled to £334 million as GA reduced its

weighting in equities from 40 per cent to 25 per cent. The company is paying a foreign income dividend of 12.5p, up 10 per cent. It is undecided on whether to buy back shares to reduce its capital surplus. It wants issues around advanced corporation tax and FIDs clarified first.

Tempus, page 26

Holliday sees 64% surge in profits

By MARK COURT

HOLLIDAY CHEMICAL, the specialty chemicals group, began its rehabilitation in the City by announcing a 64 per cent increase in half-year pre-tax profits yesterday.

The profits surge, from £8.1 million to £13.4 million, was driven by Uquifa, its Spanish pharmaceutical subsidiary, which manufactures Ranitidine, the active ingredient for the generic rival to Zantac, Glaxo Wellcome's stomach ulcer drug that came off patent in the US last month.

Ranitidine contributed £4 million to profits in the first half and Michael Pegram, Holliday's chairman, said the product had "excellent growth prospects".

Mark Robbins, joint chief executive, said the product would contribute at least £4 million in the second half. "How much it moves forward is up to the open market, which is difficult to forecast. We don't know how many people will go to market over the next few years," he said.

An interim dividend of 2.5p, compared with 2.1p, will be paid on October 1.

Holliday has given its shareholders a rollercoaster ride since its flotation in 1993. Brokers believe that Ranitidine might help to restore the company's reputation in the City.

Tempus, page 26

Sedgwick denies search for a merger partner

By GAVIN LUMSDEN

SAX RILEY, chairman of Sedgwick, the insurance broker, insisted yesterday the company would remain independent after speculation grew that it was looking for a merger partner.

Earlier Mr Riley had unfavourably compared Sedgwick's strategy of constantly aiming to grow in size and turnover with Willis Corroon, a rival whose chairman John Reeve has publicly stated his opposition to consolidation in the sector. The City took this as a hint that Sedgwick had

approached Willis Corroon and been rebuffed.

Mr Riley also denied that Sedgwick's consultancy business had suffered as a result of its "naming and shaming" over pensions mis-selling by Helen Liddell, Economic Secretary, in May. Ms Liddell criticised Sedgwick and Legal & General for their attitude to the pensions review attempting to clear up to 500,000 potential cases of mis-selling by the end of next year.

Mr Riley said: "We have been in touch with all of our clients and they support our position. We are continuing to pick up new business." Half-year results showed consultancy revenues had risen £12.1 million to £113.5 million. He insisted Sedgwick, which has 6,000 pension transfer cases to review, would meet the Government's timetable.

The strong pound knocked £7 million off the group's interim profits. On constant exchange rates pre-tax profits rose 16 per cent to £66.5 million. The dividend remains at 3p.

Halstead hit in Australia

SHARES in the James Halstead Group, the floor coverings and tents maker, tumbled from 242½p to 205p yesterday after a profits warning (Adam Jones writes).

The problems centre on Driza-Bone, its Australian wet-weather clothing subsidiary, which has been hit by a stock build-up.

Halstead blamed the strong Australian dollar and waning government support for exporters. It said profits could fall 20 per cent below market expectations for the year to June 30 of £9.5 million before tax.



General Accident Continued strong performance

6 MONTHS' RESULTS

	6 Months to 30.6.97 Estimated £m	6 Months to 30.6.96 Estimated £m
General Premiums	2,210	2,230
Life Premiums	956	853
Underwriting Result	(66)	(105)
Investment Income	280	272
Life Profits	63	46
Operating Profit before Taxation	260	193
Profit Attributable to Ordinary Shareholders	410	226
Operating Earnings per Ordinary Share	40.3p	26.8p
Interim Dividend per Ordinary Share	12.5p	11.4p

- Record first half operating pre-tax profit of £260m (1996: £193m).
- Continued UK underwriting profitability of £19m (1996: £11m).
- Profit contribution from life operations up by 37% to £63m.
- Worldwide underwriting deficit reduced by 37% to £66m.
- Growth in investment earnings in local currencies of 7%.
- Interim dividend up 9.6% at 12.5p per share.

A copy of the Interim Announcement will be posted to Shareholders on 16th August 1997. Copies may also be obtained from the office of the Secretary at the address below.

General Accident plc

General Accident plc, World Headquarters: Pitheavlis, Perth, Scotland PH2 0NH
A copy of the results is available on Internet: <http://www.ga.co.uk>

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Creating Business Advantage

City Centre looking at franchising

By DOMINIC WALSH

CITY CENTRE Restaurants, best-known for its Garfunkel's, Deep Pan Pizza and Caffè Uno brands, is formulating plans to expand overseas through franchising.

James Naylor, chief executive, said the company received "huge numbers of calls from all over the world from people keen to franchise our brands" and he had recently appointed an executive to investigate opportunities.

The news came as Mr Naylor unveiled pre-tax profits, excluding asset disposals, up 18.1 per cent to £6.3 million in the first half of 1997. Turnover was 23 per cent higher at £74.9 million, while like-for-like sales were ahead 4.1 per cent.

Some 25 restaurants were added during the half-year, 13 from the acquisition in April of the Est Est chain for £13 million. Another 28 will have opened by the end of the year.

The interim dividend, payable on October 14, is 0.45p.

Tempus, page 26

Drug tests lift shares at Cortecs

By PAUL DURMAN

SHARES in Cortecs International jumped 20½p to 236½p yesterday when the drug development company reported "exciting" results from clinical trials of its Pseudostat vaccine for chronic bronchitis.

Last Thursday the company reported good results from tests of Macrotin, the osteoporosis capsule that Cortecs will shortly file for approval with European regulators. Its shares were at just above 150p earlier this month.

A five-month phase 2 trial involving 91 chronic bronchitis patients found that those who had taken Pseudostat suffered roughly one tenth the number of infections as those who had received the placebo. Michael Flynn, president of Cortecs, said: "We had not expected the result would be quite so dramatic."

There are five million UK bronchitis sufferers and Cortecs estimates the potential market for Pseudostat at between \$500 million and \$1 billion.



STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Allied Domecq in demand as investors change tack

THE search is under way among City investors for value. Now that the dead-end created by a strong pound has been broken by the Bank of England's view that interest rates have peaked, investors can move away from the safe banks and drug companies and look for higher returns.

Allied Domecq was one beneficiary of this change of tack, with its price climbing 17p to a high for the year of 474.2p as over four million shares changed hands.

As the stable bulls are quick to testify, the shares have been poor performers, well overshadowed by Guinness, 5.1p dearer at 588p, and Grand Metropolitan, 5p higher at 592.5p. There is plenty of value tied up in Allied's portfolio of well-known brands, which could be unlocked if someone were to find the courage. And with the shares yielding 6 per cent, they are proving difficult to ignore.

Lehman Brothers also joined the rush for value yesterday by raising its recommendation in GKN, up 36p at 121.7p, from "neutral" to "outperform" in the wake of last week's profits news. The broker is said to be excited by prospects and is forecasting earnings growth of 15 per cent a year. Just a day before the figures were released on August 5, the shares were about £10.60.

Another company that has seen its share price advance in the past week is Vendome, where currency factors have come into play. Last Thursday, as the pound started to lose ground against the dollar and mark, after interest rates had risen for the fourth month in a row, the shares were trading at the 450p level. They closed last night 21.5p higher at 511p.

Other companies reckoned to be offering good value were BAT Industries, up 17p at 517.5p, BTCL, up to 267.5p, and Securix, which still owns a 40 per cent stake in Cellstock, 15.5p to 300.5p.

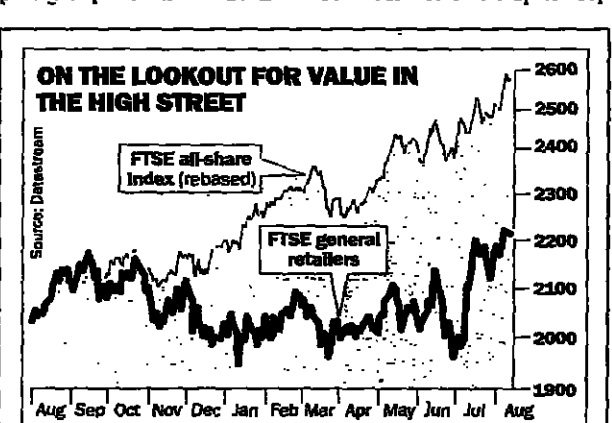
Stock shortages continued to drive the rest of the equity market higher, enabling the FTSE 100 index to nudge back towards its record level. It finished just a shade below its best of the day with a rise of 43.9 at 5,075.8 as total turnover reached 826 million shares.

Investors took the news of the higher than expected inflation number in their stride.



Safeway, 12p higher, said by one broker to be oversold

Sentiment remains underpinned by comments from the Bank of England, suggesting rates may have risen far enough for the time being. The drug companies were a dull market after Morgan Stanley, the US securities house, took the view that there was only limited scope for "upside earnings surprise" among their highly rated US peer groups. Glaxo Wellcome



ON THE LOOKOUT FOR VALUE IN THE HIGH STREET

KINGFISHER increased 15.5p to 750p and Dixons rose 10p to 618p as Credit Lyonnais Laing, the broker, reiterated its positive stance on the shares.

The move came after publication of the July survey from the British Retail Consortium (BRC) that showed leading retailers' sales climbing as consumers spent their building society windfall gains.

The overall value of sales grew 5.2 per cent on a like-for-like basis, compared with 4.5 per cent in June. The average sales rise in the past three months was

4.8 per cent. Sales of white goods, including television, audio equipment, video and camcorders were particularly strong.

The broker has taken heart from this and says that the main beneficiaries will be Dixons and Kingfisher, which owns Comet.

Rod Forest, of Laing, says: "The BRC survey confirms that the windfalls are being spent on big-ticket items. We have merely reiterated our view. They are too lowly rated with strong earnings prospects. Most of the sector leaders appear fully valued."

after NatWest Securities upgraded its recommendation of the shares from "hold" to "add". Alan Erskine has looked at the food producers and thinks value is emerging among the second liners, with a possible 10 per cent upside in Hillsdown.

In the meantime, Unilever, 10p better at £19.19, continues to see its rating driven closer to the multinational consumer companies such as Procter & Gamble.

Erskine has downgraded his recommendation in Devro, unchanged at 390p, from "add" to "hold", after outperforming the market by 23 per cent, so far, this year, while moving Cadbury Schweppes from "hold" to "reduce".

J Sainsbury stood out in a market short of stock with a rise of 16.5p at 455p. Earlier in the day HSBC James Capel, the broker, had indicated that the shares were looking a little expensive, while rival Safeway, 12p dearer at 396.5p, appeared to be oversold. Capel has suggested that clients switch out of Sainsbury and into Safeway, or even Asda, 4p better at 150.5p.

Shares of Hamlet Group, the clothing importer, were suspended at 22.5p pending clarification of its financial position.

What is Bob Morton up to? He has bought a further 50,000 shares in Whimney Mackay-Lewis, unchanged at 21p. It takes his total holding to 1.5 million shares, or 19.65 per cent. Perhaps he has some plans at last for the architectural consultant.

□ **GILT-EDGED:** The bond market shrugged off the jump in inflation last month and instead drew strength from the weaker pound. Gains of around 8p were posted among longer dated issues.

The best performance was reserved for index-linked issues which scored rises of up to £1, while in the futures pit the September series of the long gilt put on £1 at £14.4p.

Treasury 8 per cent 2015 was £2.32p better at £102.22p, while Treasury 8 per cent 2030 was three ticks lower at £102.23p.

□ **NEW YORK:** Shares clung to modest gains in late morning trade, with dealers reluctant to take major positions in advance of figures on retail sales and consumer price. By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 12.54 ahead at 8,074.65.

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MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):	
Dow Jones	5074.65 (+12.54)
S&P Composite	980.00 (+3.09)
Tokyo:	
Nikkei Average	19098.11 (+274.53)
Hong Kong:	
Hang Seng	16383.41 (+77.00)
Amsterdam:	
EOE Index	978.40 (+5.33)
Sydney:	
ASX	2650.50 (+16.70)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	4363.09 (+20.94)
Singapore:	
SEAC	1893.46 (+0.48)
Brussels:	
General	12993.52 (+171.97)
Paris:	
CAC-40	2998.57 (+15.13)
Zurich:	
SWX	1236.20 (+4.90)

London:	
FT 30	3226.5 (+20.6)
FTSE 100	5075.8 (+43.9)
FTSE 250	4703.4 (+26.8)
FTSE 350	2638.1 (+1.9)
FTSE Europe 100	2757.2 (+4.1)
FTSE All-Share	2756.3 (+18.8)
FTSE Non-Financial	2574.0 (+15.9)
FTSE Financial	125.30 (+0.17)
FTSE Govt Secs	96.73 (+0.24)
Bargains	50943
SDAQ Volume	628.00
US:	
Dollar	1.5781 (-0.0123)
German Mark	2.2394 (-0.0105)
Exchange Index	101.7 (-0.4)
Bank of England (official close)	1.4963
ESCI	1.1772
ESD	1.1772
1975 Jul 31 (3.78) Jan 1987-100	
1975 Jul 31 (3.78) Jan 1987-100	

RECENT ISSUES

Biffen	236p	-1
Blakes Clothing	71p	
Bristol & West Plc	107p	+1
Cammell Laird	141p	+10p
Delam	269p	
EMU	1.15	
Fairfield Ent	117p	
Fairplace Consulting	3p	
GR Holdings	65p	
Galen Holdings	194p	
Grenfell Group	131p	
Hellon Pubs	102p	
Ionics Group	381p	-2p
Kingsfisher Leisure	175p	
Lepus	7p	
Metroline	377p	
Reaumur Merit	108p	
SBS Group	107p	
Severn Trent	37p	
Stentor Warrants	46p	
Ted Baker	137p	
Thorn	20p	
Viglen Technology	60p	

RIGHTS ISSUES

Active Imaging n/p	1
Fortune Oil n/p (1)	3
Golden Land n/p (2)	2
Logica n/p (605)	220 +11p

MAJOR CHANGES

RISKS:	
Gasol	283p (+28p)
MAID	220p (+15p)
Brit Biotech	187p (+11p)
Xenova	280p (+16p)
Roboro	181p (+11p)
Vanguard	441p (+23p)
Prohibition	615p (+23p)
Allied Domecq	474p (+17p)
Caledonia	670p (+23p)
Horlock	313p (+11p)
Safeway	396p (+12p)
FALLS:	
Richards	20p (-10p)
Halshead (J)	205p (-37p)
Evander	200p (-14p)
Central Pacific	407p (-15p)
Argos	585p (-22p)
Travis Perkins	485p (-11p)

Closing Prices Page 29

General marches on

COMPARED to some of the insurance leviathans, General Accident has shown itself to be a nimble operator. Like a canny Highland warrior, the Perth-based company has travelled light, planning meticulously for battles it can win and slinking quickly away when the going gets too rough.

This approach is reaping rewards. With competition intense in all insurance markets worldwide, General Accident has still managed to achieve a record half-year pre-tax profit of £260 million. Its acquisition of Provident Mutual, the pensions provider, has obviously helped. Less well known is the contribution of the 60 branches in the UK that help service the needs of small companies in the provinces. This has enabled the company to declare an underwriting profit in the UK.

Bob Scott, the Australian chief executive,

deserves much of the praise. He is dismissive of those insurers who attempt to compete in all areas at once for wasting shareholders' money. His abandonment of the Dutch and Danish markets and the pruning of 600 jobs in the US shows his resolve.

With this kind of performance, calls for share buy backs are likely to be muted, even though GA is in a good position to do so. Switching money out of equities has given it the resources to buy back 5 per cent of its stock.

Guardian Royal Exchange, less well-regarded, seems determined to hang on to the contents of its brimming coffers, contrary to the desires of some investors, and pays the price with its shares on a 10 per cent discount to its net assets. By contrast, GA stands at 10 per cent premium, a recognition of quality.

Smith & Nephew

SMITH & NEPHEW'S inability to secure any important acquisitions has given it an air of frustration, which is shared by the market.

Although it would be good for the company if it were to find the right £500 million purchase, it should not be punished too harshly for being cautious. It is, after all, in a difficult market and cannot afford to make mistakes.

The extent of the difficulties were highlighted by yesterday's results. First, like other exporters, the company has been struck by the strength of the pound. Then, just as the US market is beginning to improve, continental Europe becomes a big headache.

Spending on health is under pressure in countries attempting to meet the

Maastricht criteria for EMU

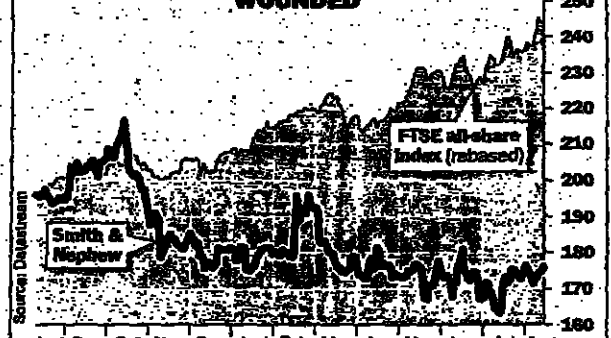
entry. Germany, France and Italy are big markets for Smith & Nephew.

The US is looking better, with sales down 1 per cent rather than last year's 3 per cent. But attempts to raise prices have only just begun, and it is not yet clear if the increases will stick.

Many hopes are pinned on

Dermagraft, the skin replacement product

that Smith & Nephew will launch in the next few months. The group expects sales by 2001 to be about £150 million, with profit margins around the company average. Still, Dermagraft's potential is not enough to make the shares, up 1p to 174.5p yesterday, more than a hold.



Holliday Chemical

INVESTING with Holliday Chemical has been no vacation. Michael Pegram, its chairman and founder, has sometimes had difficulty hanging on to his executives and the speciality chemical company since its 1993 flotation.

But yesterday's surprise 64 per cent leap in pre-tax profits might indicate a new beginning for the group, with the focus on pharmaceuticals and the opportunities for smaller manufacturers when established drugs lose their patent protection. Through its Liquifac subsidiary, Holliday is hoping to make about £8 million this year from supplying ranitidine to the generic drugs companies that are set to challenge Glaxo Wellcome's Zantac, the leading ulcer drug that came off patent last month.

A further £10 million from other contract manufacturing

of pharmaceuticals and a £13.5 million contribution from the pigments and dyes division would give pre-tax profits of about £27 million after interest for 1997 — £5 million ahead of previous expectations.

Many more big drugs will be exposed to competition over the next few years, though the fierce battle among the generics companies means Holliday will have to fight to protect its margins. It will also take time for Mr Pegram to restore the City's faith in Holliday. But now, with a more balanced management team, Holliday still has something to offer to investor, even after the 23p rise to 176.5p yesterday.

City Centre

SINCE becoming chief executive of City Centre Restaurants, James Naylor has quietly set about adding new brands to the Garfunkel's and Deep Pan Pizzas that his pre-

decessor Phillip Kaye brought to the high street.

He recognised that pizza had become so generic that Deep Pan's main competition comes from the supermarkets rather than rival chains. The brand has been whittled down so that only about half of the current 90-strong estate are in the high street. The rest, located in multiplex complexes, continue to do well, but the future in the high street looks doubtful.

Of course, developing new brands, such as Wok Wok, OK Diner and Café Uno, is an imprudent scheme and not all have succeeded. But its portfolio is now broad enough and robust enough to ride the fads of public taste. Franchising abroad could also provide long-term benefits at little risk.

Pre-tax profits for the year of £19.7 million would put the shares on about 17 times earnings, which is a deserved premium to the market.

EDITED BY PAUL DURMAN

COMMODITIES

LIFFE	
Cocoa	1035-1040 Mar 1141-1140
1040-1045 Mar 1141-1140	
1045-1050 Mar 1141-1140	
1050-1055 Mar 1141-1140	
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1075-1080 Mar 1141-1140	
1080-1085 Mar 1141-1140	
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1100-1105 Mar 1141-1140	
1105-1110 Mar 1141-1140	
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1185-1190 Mar 1141-1140	

The Keswick star is eclipsed at Hong Kong's new dawn

Family charm offensive may have been left too late says Fraser Nelson

As the crowds celebrated the handover of Hong Kong to Beijing, Henry Keswick was in one of the island's hospitals. Chinese mystics might see more in his misfortune than merely a shoulder shattered in a fall, and see a symbol of an ailing dynasty.

The Keswick empire, created 163 years ago and progressing from opium shipments to a vast array of investments, ranging from insurance to Kwik Save stores, now seems unlikely to survive intact for a future generation.

In Hong Kong, its businesses are under threat of local takeover. In Britain, Sir Chips Keswick is struggling to rebuild the reputation of Hambro's, where he is executive chairman. Henry's wife, Tessa, who used to be able to glory in a powerful role advising the Chancellor of the Exchequer, is now having to work hard to find political allies in the new administration. In short, the Keswicks are beginning to look as if all their appearances in the gossip columns have eventually brought on them the curse of *Helio!* magazine: life is looking tough.

Jardine Matheson — which has for generations been the family's financial powerhouse — has found itself without friends in high places in its traditional base, Hong Kong. Unless they forge some new contacts soon, the brothers could be forced to give up their multibillion pound empire and cut the dynasty off completely from Hong Kong. But after the way they bungled their relations with the Chinese Government in the run-up to the handover, that may prove too difficult.

Although the red flag has been hoisted over most of



Henry Keswick's biggest coup has been his meeting with Zhu Rongji



Jonathan Powell Tessa Keswick advised former Chancellor



Sir Charles and Carla Powell: close to former PM



Sir Chips Keswick Simon Keswick

Hong Kong's leading business institutions. Jardine Matheson still controls 40 per cent of the offices in the colony. Its other interests are so vast that, it can be argued, Jardine is still running the former colony as a kind of involuntary joint venture with Beijing.

But, having spent the best part of the past decade thinking of ways to escape Beijing's clutches, transferring their company's listing to Singapore and moving its legal base to Bermuda, while keeping themselves in London, establishing a happier partnership looks unlikely.

Beijing has scowled at the brothers from a distance. When the brothers led the flight to domiciles outside Hong Kong, Chinese officials regarded their company as the worst of the "capitalist run-

ning dogs". However, it remembered what the brothers occasionally seemed to forget: that no matter how far the share certificates are scattered, the company's foundations in Hong Kong's property market are firmly rooted to the ground.

Aside from their own fame, built on generations of wealth and empire, the three Keswick brothers, Henry, Chips and Simon, were allied with the Powell family, a political dynasty that includes Sir Charles Powell, who advised Baroness Thatcher on foreign affairs when she was Prime Minister. He went on to become a director of Jardine.

The Powells have weathered the political handover in Britain far better than the Keswicks have survived the changes in Hong Kong. Carla,

who once said her husband's deepest wish was to be stuck in an underground tunnel where neither she nor Margaret Thatcher could call him, is already seen as one of Peter Mandelson's confidants.

Jonathan Powell, Sir Charles's brother, has become Tony Blair's chief of staff. But this is cold comfort to the Keswicks' Hong Kong operations, which are being forced to make friends with the Chinese or face decline in the cold.

Enter Li Ka-shing, a Hong Kong property tycoon known to the locals as "superman". He is the Keswicks' equal and opposite: a home-grown tycoon, now the eighth-richest man in the world, who runs a £40 billion empire that owns virtually every Hong Kong office that Jardine does not.

direct interest. More vulnerable is Hongkong Land, with its lucrative property interests. Its weaker links with Jardine Matheson make it a more attractive target.

Mr Li's approach comes at a time when the Keswicks are beginning to mount an unconvincing charm offensive to the Chinese. They have been attempting a kind of corporate glasnost with the Chinese. But they have resisted China's invitation to return the listing of Jardine's shares to Hong Kong, which many see as the essential olive branch.

Henry's biggest coup to date was meeting Zhu Rongji, Senior Vice-Premier of China, who he said assured him equal treatment in all business dealings. However, Jardine still resolutely differs from other "hongs". It has not attempted to exploit growth in China by selling stakes to mainland businesses.

Even with the tacit "no hostilities" assurance from the Chinese, the Keswicks will find the investment community far less forgiving. So much time has been spent seeking ways to avoid the Communists getting a hold of their company that its financial performance has slipped.

One need only look at a couple of their chosen escape pods to see why Mr Li's offer may be welcomed. Looking for safe vehicles to transfer some capital into, Trafalgar House and Kwik Save were chosen as safe vehicles. Both performed dismally and were derided in the City.

Mr Li is preparing to hand over his businesses to his two sons, Victor and Richard, and it is likely that he has not decided just what mischief he intends to make.

If, as he insists, his 3 per cent stake in Jardine is just an investment then he has already made some £40 million paper profit on the speculation alone. If he is still musing, he can command some tight property deals from the brothers with the unspoken threat of a hostile bid looming.

Or, he could leave them to the communist jungle for a few years, and see how they enjoy running a living museum of capitalism in a country where they will never again be part of the ruling elite.

Why the next bull market will be bonds

This column argues that when the bull market finally tops out (probably, but not certainly, quite soon) the bond market will take up the running. This may sound silly. How can there possibly be a bull market in bonds when we are told not only that markets may crash any day, but that inflation is rising, and that the next rise in money rates is only a matter of time? Simply because all interest rates — long, medium and short — are still unreasonably high by historic standards. What went up hasn't come down, and gravity rules in the end.

The only trouble with the historic standards is that you need a long memory to know what they are: and my own memory, a longish one, has only now been jogged by Ian Shepherdson, HSBC's man in New York. (His bullish forecast is for US Treasury bonds, but his reasoning ought to apply, broadly, to Britain too.) It is supported partly by a chart that puts current long yields into perspective. Long yields have fallen by about half since their peak in the early 1980s.

When Paul Volcker was struggling to choke off the inflationary threat of Reaganomics, but they are still nearly double what they were in the 1940s and 1950s, and higher indeed than at any time between the First World War and the oil shock of 1973.

So "historically high" is a plain statement of fact. Rates are nearly double what an historian might expect, when you remember that inflation is little higher than in the 1950s, and the US budget deficit is melting away. (Our own inflation is actually lower than 40 years ago, but the deficit is worse.) Quite right, too, you may be muttering. After all, bond investors suffered enormous losses in real value during that great inflation, and they are determined not to be had that way again.

And it is true that investors have elephantine memories: look at the German phobia about hyperinflation, which they last suffered half a century ago. Even elephants, though, surely forget in the end, and Shepherdson suggests that they will increasingly

forget in the next few years. What will persuade them is simply the yield. In cash terms a US saver can more than triple his income simply by switching out of equities into bonds, and if inflation remains low — the New Era now proclaimed by Alan Greenspan of the US Fed — that income will become more and more tempting as the years pass.

We may never quite get back to the golden age of the Sherlock Holmes stories, when every heinous worth murdering had her fortune in consols to yield a princely 2½ per cent (four goods prices were falling in those days, and had been for the best part of 40 years). But we should still be travelling hopefully back towards that golden age: so a bond portfolio should produce handsome capital gains as well as a comforting income. This is the more certain in this age of fiscal virtue, because even as the appetite for bonds revives, the supply of new ones will be rapidly shrinking.

"So what", you may be asking? Am I supposed to get excited about a prospective profit of, say, 50 per cent if I hold bonds for the next decade, when equities deliver as much every few months? Of course not; but this is really where we came in. The New Era is no longer an eccentric minority.

6 We may never quite get back to the golden age of the Sherlock Holmes stories

view: most analysts expect inflation to stay down. But the reason why this has not much excited the bond market up to now is that the equity market has been so irresistibly tempting. That will change if and when the crash comes: the bond bull market will be kicked off by the "flight into quality", which is the mark of every financial panic.

Should you simply buy a US bond fund, or could all this be applied to Britain too? I believe it could — once we get over the twittering caused by the building society windfalls, and by a rise in petrol prices which is actually deflationary, whatever the headline figures say. The only trouble for the private saver is income tax; but a switch into bonds now, and a switch of those bonds into a personal equity plan next year, looks very safe.

Ready to be counted over joblessness?

Philip Bassett looks at a tricky decision for ministers over moves to improve the credibility of unemployment data

The Government will today announce the latest unemployment figures, which ministers hope will see a new fall in the numbers out of work and claiming benefit. But behind the announcement, Labour is shaping up to a tough decision: how unemployment should be counted in the future.

In opposition, Labour was vociferous in attacking the Government over unemployment — partly on its record (jobs being lost, people going out of work) but partly, too, on how those trends were recorded, or "fiddled". Labour claimed that the Conservative Government had changed the basis of the unemployment figures so many times the statistics were all but meaningless.

So when Labour took office, David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, faced a dilemma. Having insisted that unem-

ployment was higher than the Conservatives had maintained, would the new administration now demand that a more accurate measure of unemployment be used, and risk accusations that unemployment went "up" under Labour?

Blunkett's team is ready to decide. The Government's keynote Welfare to Work jobs programme makes the decision even more important: if unemployment is not accurately measured as Labour defines it, then the success (or otherwise) of the New Deal will not be demonstrable.

Officially, unemployment is calculated in two ways. First, the numbers out of work and claiming benefit are

counted every month. This largely administrative check then forms the monthly "claimant count" (CC), which, adjusted to take account of seasonal variations, is used as the main measure of unemployment. Secondly, every three months the Government carries out the Labour Force Survey (LFS) — a sample survey of 60,000 households, asking detailed questions about labour market activity. Unemployment is measured to United Nations' International Labour Organisation (ILO) unemployment, as it is known. ILO unemployment follows a similar pattern to the CC measure, but at a consistently higher

level, especially as economic recovery has progressed.

What Labour ministers now have to decide is whether they will shift to a monthly LFS, widely regarded as a more accurate measure of real unemployment, or in Government will shrug off the position they held in opposition because of the cost of making the move. Unemployment analysts regarded it as significant when last month ministers and officials laid such stress on the ILO data that they presented and explained it before the claimant count.

Whitehall officials are readying a set of changes that will alter significantly how the City, business and

others receive and absorb the unemployment figures. First, the Government will combine the CC and ILO data into one release of information; secondly, the presentation will focus on key data, rather than trying to present figures on every single labour market measure; and thirdly, the Government presentation will try to give a coherent picture of the labour market, rather than just a series of unconnected data sets. Officials are unsure as yet about how far down this path to go. The Office for National Statistics is considering providing its own statistical, rather than economic or political, view.

The decision will be seen by users of government data as a test of Labour's commitment to statistical and economic legitimacy. There is an opportunity to restore political, business and public credibility to data vital to measuring economic performance.

Soft teeth

PROFESSIONAL associations, don't you just love 'em? Remember when the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales fined Richard Stone and Michael Jordan, of Coopers & Lybrand, £1,000 each for not declaring conflicts of interest when they took on the Polly Peck insolvency?

Well the Insolvency Practitioners Association is now showing its teeth. It has been looking into the role of Peter Phillips, the liquidator of Robert Maxwell's estate who ran up £1.63 million of fees for his firm, Buchler Phillips, and Nabarro Nathanson, the law

firm, while recovering just £1.67 million of assets. This was the situation described by Lord Justice Ferris as "profoundly shocking".

So what does the IPA have to say about it. "We have previously, at Mr Phillips' own request, investigated the conduct of the receiver in this case," said David Sapie, IPA president, "and have found that he acted entirely appropriately."

Sapie, adds helpfully, that the IPA is happy to look at the case again. Don't call us, we'll call you.

GRAHAM HOOPER, the investment director of Chase de Vere Investments, the independent financial adviser, has found a novel way to predict stock market movements.

Hooper recently bought 38 Jacob sheep to keep the grass in his paddock down. But he has noticed that the sheep also show a surprising talent for indicating whether the FTSE 100 index will rise or fall. "If the sheep droppings are damp, I've noticed the market tends to fall, and if they are dry, it's likely to go up," he says.

On Monday morning, when the FTSE dropped nearly 65 points, the droppings were showing definite signs of soggy. But what about the



market's bounce back later on in the day? Hooper says: "The sheep missed me. There was a dew on the ground."

Pulling away

DOWN in Cleckheaton (that's near Bradford, by the way), something is stirring. John Ross, chief executive of Charles Sydney, the posh car dealership, has suddenly departed, taking a £130,000 pay-off in his pocket. No explanation, nothing, apart from an interesting rumour in the motor trade about a merger with Syner Group, the Nottingham BMW franchisee headed by Frank Syner, the former British sports car champion.

According to Raymond Edwards, the executive chairman of Charles Sydney, there is

nothing in these rumours, and the departure of Ross was entirely amicable and Edwards and Ross are the "best of friends". Apparently the business was not big enough for the both of them. Well, Cleckheaton is a small town.

THE Office of National Statistics has realised what soccerphobes all over the country knew already — that the football season is starting earlier. Increases in season ticket prices are now included in August inflation figures, not those for September. Given that the cost of going to a top flight game has gone up more than 220 per cent in the past decade, this could explain why this month's inflation figure is the highest for two years.

No old pals

OF COURSE at the moment the bedside reading of all responsible directors of public companies is the report of the Hampel committee on corporate governance. Brian Evans, the chief executive of Wyevalde Garden Centres, has clearly taken it to heart, as I found perusing the small ads.

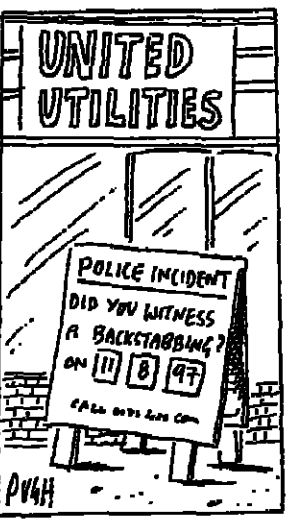
Under "business opportunities" it emerges that Wyevalde is on the lookout for two non-executive directors. "I know it's unusual, but why not?" Evans tells me. "But with all this corporate governance asking for independent non-exec-

utive, we thought we'd get away from the old pals act and cast our net a bit wider." He advertised in "business opportunities" not "situations vacant" because Wyevalde wants people who already have jobs. It will save a few bob on headhunters' fees too.

For artists

A MISSIVE arrives from Becks beer to tell me that it has spent more than £2 million on arts sponsorship over the past decade. This includes getting leading artists to design limited edition beer labels. Apparently Damien Hirst's label is most sought after. But who wants half a sheep on their beer bottle?

JASON NISSÉ



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Hirst fans can get pickled

هذه امانة الاله

Daniel Rosenthal reports on the 40-year-old LP recordings that are coming back to haunt their now-famous casts



Trevor Nunn (right) with Peter Woodthorpe recording *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the ADC



Ian Holm (left) and Richard Johnson at the 1970 re-recording of *Othello* for better sound quality

Long playing, long lasting Shakespeare

Never in the field of audio drama was so much recorded by so many over such a long period. In 1957, the British Council decided to finance the production of unabridged LP versions of the complete works of Shakespeare. These were to be records which could be studied and enjoyed across the globe.

Dr George "Dad" Rylands, fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and passionate advocate of clear, precise verse-speaking, was hired as director, with the late Harley Ussell, director of the Argo record label, as his technical supervisor. By 1964, the pair had co-ordinated the recording of all 37 plays, released on Argo without so much as an "Ay" or "Oh" missing. *Hamlet* and *Richard III* weighed in at five LPs each. *The Comedy of Errors* was a snug double album with "bonus" sonnets on the fourth side.

Next week PolyGram, which holds the rights to the Argo Shakespeare, will begin a major reissue of the recordings, with *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (the best-selling Shakespeares in print) re-released on double cassette. More titles will follow in 1998.

The cast lists reveal how Rylands used Cambridge undergraduates who had appeared at the Arts Theatre in his Marlowe Society productions (among them Ian McKellen, Derek Jacobi and Trevor Nunn) alongside some of British theatre's most illustrious names: John Gielgud and Peggy Ashcroft starred in *Much Ado*, Michael Hordern was Prospero.

Here, Rylands and some of his former colleagues recall a marathon venture which, according to PolyGram's Alex Mitchison, would today be "impossibly expensive".

■ **Dadie Rylands**
Ninety-five in October, he took numerous Argo roles, including *Angelo* in *Measure for Measure*.

"Our first 'studio' was the Amateur Dramatic Club (ADC) theatre in Cambridge, which was far from sound-proof. Whenever a dog barked or a plane flew overhead we had to go back and re-record. It was enormously frustrating. When we moved to the Decca studios in north London, in

1960, things became more straightforward.

"For me, it was absolutely essential that the recordings should be unabridged, to give teachers of Shakespeare the real text. I found it very difficult to get what I wanted in those plays which were hackneyed, such as *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, or unfamiliar to the public, such as *Troilus and Cressida*.

"Nevertheless, the recordings were very well reviewed

and, I hope, very much enjoyed. I remain proud of them because they represented such a tremendous undertaking."

■ **Peter Orr**
Deputy director of the British Council's recorded sound unit in the Sixties, edited the recordings and acted.

"The sessions at the ADC were very civilised — some of the professional actors were happy to accept half a case of claret instead of a fee.

"We recorded everything out of sequence, arranging the schedule according to which professionals were available on particular days. We worked on *Richard III* and the three parts of *Henry VI* concurrently because they share common characters. This left one very distinguished actor totally confused. In the midst of all these *Roses* battles, he came up to Dadie and said: 'Please could you tell me which side I'm on?'"

■ **Margaret Drabble**
Novelist, was *Imogen* for the Argo *Cymbeline*, a few months after playing the part for the Marlowe Society.

"I had a very bad stammer as a young person and it came back more severely during the recording of *Cymbeline* than it ever did on stage.

"In the theatre I learnt to sidestep it. But perhaps because for a record you don't have the 'high' of live performance and are concentrating so much on your voice, I found the recording very difficult.

"My own voice sounds so awful to me that I've never dared listen to the *Cymbeline* record."

■ **Prunella Scales**
Actor, was in her early twenties when she took several parts, including *Cordelia*, and *Rosaline* in *Love's Labour's Lost*.

"I had been acting professionally for about six years when I auditioned for Dadie in London. At that stage, directors tended to cast me as a 'character actress' — which

simply means you are not pretty enough to play the romantic leads. So it was good to be offered the chance to play *Cordelia* and *Rosaline*.

"I learnt an enormous amount from Dadie, and from actors like William Devlin [who played Lear] and Irene Worth [Cleopatra]."

■ **Richard Johnson**
Actor and producer, played *Othello* and *Antony*.

"Dadie was a genial master of ceremonies at the recordings. He gave us general notes, we ran the play through a couple of times and then just got on with recording it.

"Ian Holm was excellent as *Iago* [when the original *Othello* was re-recorded in 1970 for better sound quality], very sly and insinuating. I think we were rather a good duo, and have always regretted that I never played *Othello* on stage.

"I greet the reissues with a certain trepidation because the style of acting is bound to have changed. That's the thing with recordings and films: you are preserved rather like a fly

in aspic and it's not usually a very edifying spectacle."

■ **Trevor Nunn**
Incoming National Theatre director, played several parts, including *Gower* in *Henry V*.

"I had to do *Gower* with virtually no rehearsal. He had come to the battlefield straight from school — which, at 19, I more or less had.

"As undergraduates we found it hard to believe that we were suddenly among very good professional actors, contributing to how scenes were to be interpreted. To work with someone like Irene Worth was a gift beyond price.

"The recordings continue to demonstrate everything that is good about presenting, with clarity and attention to detail, texts that have been revered for centuries. They are superbly spoken, but they were not acted to the point where there is revelation or surprise."

■ **The Argo Shakespeares** are re-released on August 18 on PolyGram Spoken Word, price £7.99 per play

Problem left unsolved

A director who is able to express perception through invention can show this "problem" play making almost perfect sense. Fairytale simplicity married to human complexity is never going to prove an ideal match, but more can be done to persuade us that the attempt is worth the try than Irina Brook manages in this production, setting off from here on a four-month national tour.

The fantasy element comes from Helena, poor daughter of a dead physician, who dares to love her benefactor's son, Bertram, and claims him as a reward after curing the king of France of his fistula. Reality contributes Bertram's outrage at being so allotted. He goes off with his false friend Parolles to the Tuscan wars,

whither Helena follows in disguise, tricks him into going to bed with her, and all ends well.

The crucial role is Helena, and the crucial relationship that between Bertram and Parolles. The latter has to transform something which young Bertram relishes but must outgrow: the former must show herself to be as worthy, virtuous, beautiful and all the other superlatives that her supporters continually tell us she is.

Brook decides to set the play in an African market. Traders display wooden toys, hardware, leather goods, and into this busy world two white women wander, looking for souvenirs. Merriment ensues. Then one of the traders suggests they tell a story, like Mickey Rooney in the movies: right here! And off we go.

Africa supplies too little to justify its presence. There is drumming, and a metal bowl struck sonorously with a rod. Helena's miracle cure is shown in shadow play behind a sheet. Magical arm-waving seems to be what does the trick, and Rachel Pickup's arms are remarkably elegant. In the early scenes her speech is staccato, varied yet her displays of ardour, intently leaning forward, turn hers into a curiously old-fashioned performance. By contrast, she is almost sluttish with Michael Grecco's Parolles in his banter about virginity, ending the scene sitting legs astride on his groin. Some may say this justifies calling her "dear perfection", but it turns her into a sexual cheat.

Leifer's mockery of Parolles goes for nothing, and too many of the lines are spoken without discernible knowledge of their meanings. After the achievements of Brook's last two productions this is a disappointment.

JEREMY KINGSTON

Fiesta reborn in new sound world

BBC PROMS

The detail in the Albert Hall. Winds were often masked by strings, and a significant harp line lost. Nevertheless, *Feria*'s tight trumpet fanfare burst in with all the fiesta energy of its Spanish title. Its sequence of six structural "regions" returned during the work, giving it a satisfying sense of unity, but nothing is quite what it seems. The familiar, on careful inspection, is actually used to alienate: a beguiling allusion to Monteverdi's *Arianna's Lament* rose up and glistening major chords ap-

peared as symbolic cadence points rather than harmonic homecomings. With a dozen performances and a recording ahead, *Feria* has a bright future.

Saraste and the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra brought a deep, swinging measure to the Sibelius Violin

Concerto but Christian Tetzlaff, whose intense, almost fevered tone sounded oddly antique against the rounder orchestral sound, drove it harder and faster. Plunging headlong through the first-movement cadenza, he never relaxed into the broad melody that follows. And though he played an electrifying allegro, one missed introspection in the adagio and, most of all, rhythmic subtlety.

It was a tall order to play a Beethoven symphony the night after Gardiner's riveting performance of the Ninth. But Saraste delivered a most enjoyable *Eroica*, notable for its melting horn solos and dead centre tuning despite the sweltering hall.

HELEN WALLACE

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament

CHRIS OFILI

Age: 28.

In demand: Painters are back in vogue again, and he is very much a painter, turning people into dazzling patterns of coloured dots. When still a student at Chelsea he won a prize at the Whitworth Young Contemporaries. He has since won a following in mixed shows (most recently *About Vision: New British Painting in the 1990s* at MOMA Oxford), has shown solo in New York, London and (next) Berlin, will be in the RA's *Sensation* show, and is preparing for a big new touring museum show early next year.

Does he see art as essentially visual? "Of course. If you go into the National Gallery

Who starts by asking what the conceptual basis of the *Wilton Diptych* is?

The *Wilton Diptych*? "Don't you think it is the most beautiful thing? It almost melts on your tongue. Where can you get more pleasure than that?"

So he believes art should give pleasure? "What's the point of making it if it doesn't? I want to do something which is fun for me, and I hope will be fun for other people too. Serious as well, of course. But not dreary or boring."

Beginnings: Born in Manchester, he wanted to be a furniture designer, but as soon as he embarked on the foundation course and



was it. He studied under very unrestrictive teachers, who believed students should start by finding their own way. Then Chelsea and the Royal College, prizes and exposure. He found a London dealer, Victoria Miro, for himself, totting his portfolio up.

A nest of the avant garde, surely? "I don't really think about definitions. I have trouble enough finding out who and what I want to be."

Do his Nigerian origins make a difference? "I'm sure it's all in there somewhere. But so is Manchester. I did go on an art scholarship to Zimbabwe recently, and found I felt pretty affected. I saw these extraordinary patterns of coloured dots in some of the early cave paintings, and that set me off."

That places the dots. How about those brown lumps on the surface of his paintings? "Oh, the elephant dung. I dunno, I had a lot pointed out to me in Zimbabwe and somehow found it inspiring. Ambitions: "To go on living one day at a time, enjoying myself with what I do, and hoping that comes across to the rest of the world."

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR

Mondrian

at the Tate

Mondrian: Nature to Abstraction
From the Haags Gemeentemuseum, The Hague
26 July - 30 November 1997
Advance tickets £8.60/£4
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Centenary summer programme
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Opera to please the balletomane; Tippett and Tharp honoured; too many tricks spoil the Bard. Plus Festival art shows

A fun night out with a frog in drag

Say, we could do the show right here in this bar! This is the lack-of-point of Mark Morris's production of Rameau's *Platée* for the Royal Opera, and why not? The Prologue is after all set in a vineyard and subtitled *The Birth of Comedy*, and, while detached from the main action, shows assorted low-lives planning to invent a new kind of entertainment, which they indeed do.

Platée (1745) is not Great Art, but in its chic, sophisticated, inconsequential heartlessness it is the progenitor of a peculiarly Gallic form of theatre. Rossini (*Comte Ory*), Offenbach, Chabrier and Poulenc are among Rameau's offspring.

Adrienne Lobel's beautifully designed 1940-ish bar, the sort of place where the wearing of trousers is not obligatory, gradually fills up with reassuringly recognisable types — a sailor, a policeman, a drunk (Thespis), a deviously tipsy showgirl, Fifth Avenue types slumming (Mormus and Thalia), and someone called "Dyke" (I thought that was a word not used in polite society nowadays). We are in the world of Jerome Robbins's *On the Town*, and the milieu of 19th and 20th-century dance are neatly combined.

And dance is what it's all about: at first it seemed a pity for the Royal Opera chorus to be confined to the pit while Morris's 16 dancers enthusiastically mime their words; but the wit, the freshness, the sheer zaniness of his choreography soon sweep doubts away. The action of both Prologue and opera proper

OPERA

breaks off at the slightest excuse with the words "on dance" and, since Rameau was surely the first great composer of dance music, it's hard to cavil.

The airy textures, the rhythms, the forward impulse must set even the most recalcitrant operatic toe tapping, certainly as delivered by the ROH Orchestra under Nicho-



las McGegan's hyper-intensely spirited direction.

A terrarium at the back of the bar links Prologue to opera, which shows Jupiter pretending to fancy the vain, hideously ugly marsh nymph Platée in order to teach the pathologically jealous Juno a lesson. Here Morris and his costume designer Isaac Mizrahi let their fantasy run riot. I particularly enjoyed duets for turtles and snakes to Rameau's *musette* Minuet, and a routine for the Three Graces (one of whom is a chap) that would stop Canova in his tracks. Only the elabo-

rate dance for children and philosophers threatened to topple over into the cuteness that is Morris's Achilles heel.

As may be gathered, the show is not exactly over-directed in an operatic sense — the subsidiary singing characters are left to get on with it — but at its centre is a magical, beautifully sung performance of the drag title role by Jean-Paul Fouchécourt.

The diminutive French tenor's make-up and costume are masterly: he's a little green, pear-shaped frog in a diaphanous tea-gown barely concealing a pink belly-button, modest rope of pearls and lorgnette dangling from diamond bracelet. With huge frog feet and hands, Fouchécourt manages to preserve the dignity of Alastair Sim and the chaste flirtatiousness of Jack Lemmon on similar assignments. In a word, a classic travesty impersonation, and the moment when the joke is revealed, his frock is torn off and he hops back into the marsh is genuinely shocking, a momentary passing cloud in this hilariously heartless entertainment.

It's Fouchécourt's show, but François Le Roux (Jupiter), Diana Montague (Juno) and Mark Padmore (Thespis and Mercury) sing idiomatically and clearly, their words always audible, and Nicole Tibbels (*La Folie*) has great fun with her parody of an Italian coloratura aria, hurling out top Ds and even an E like fireworks. A delightfully civilised, undemanding evening, sponsored by TSB Bank Scotland.

RODNEY MILNES



Mark Padmore (in blazer) and the excellent Jean-Paul Fouchécourt (right) with various Satyrs in Mark Morris's production of Rameau's *Platée*

Tippett with too many strings attached

THE Edinburgh Festival does not have a great record as far as new music is concerned. It can, however, take legitimate pride in bringing two of the most successful of Sir Michael Tippett's scores into the world — the *Fantasia Concertante* on a Theme of Corelli in 1953, and the *Concerto for Orchestra* in 1963. So it was good thinking, in this fiftieth birthday year, to link those two pieces with *A Child of our Time* in an all-Tippett concert.

Or so it seemed until the public demonstrated that it was not enormously interested in the event, and until we heard what Richard Armstrong and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra made of the two

Edinburgh scores. Neither the *Fantasia Concertante* nor the *Concerto for Orchestra* is easy to perform, least of all when they must share rehearsal time both with each other and with a big choral work. On the other hand, the problems of balancing and blending the complexities of the string counterpoint in the *Fantasia Concertante* are well known and should surely not result in a performance that sounds as though the composer did not know his job.

The more clearly defined melodic shapes and textural profiles in the first movement of the *Concerto for Orchestra* encouraged a correspondingly more convincing performance from the RSNO wind, harp and

CONCERTS

RSNO/Armstrong
Schiff
Usher Hall

piano. But the problem of string proliferation arises again in the second movement, and it brought much the same results as it did in the earlier work. Happily, the more dynamic structure of the finale inspired more confidence.

Even more happily, *A Child of our Time* was presented in a thoroughly distinctive and well organised per-

formance. Richard Armstrong clearly does not believe in indulging sentiment or finding easy consolation in this work. His brisk tempi occasionally threatened the security of the ensemble, but they also contributed to an interpretation admirable for its rigorous frankness, and its resigned rather than radiant refuge in philosophy at the end. It put much stress on the resources of the Edinburgh Festival Chorus but the lines remained unshakably firm, the textures clear. The soloists too — Christine Brewer, Michelle DeYoung, Ian Bostridge and Alastair Miles — were all integrated into the illusion-free approach to the work. The Tippett echoes had scarcely

drained away when the Usher Hall was in use again for something else. András Schiff is playing through the first book of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, on the piano and in numerical order, in a pair of eagerly awaited late-night recitals. I welcome this pianist's attitude to Bach's keyboard music. Time and again in the first 12 of the Preludes and Fugues musical history opened out in front of him, mainly in the direction of Chopin but also towards Debussy and even Rachmaninov. What those pianist composers found there cannot be ignored by a pianist as sensitive as Schiff.

GERALD LARNER

Three uneasy pieces blow hot and cold

DANCE

Tharp!
Playhouse

By giving her new company a name as exclamatory and presumptuous as Tharp!, the American choreographer Twyla Tharp immediately sets up the highest of expectations. Add to this her 30 years in the choreography business and it is fair to assume that a master of making dances has something really special in store for us.

Well, not quite. What is really special about Tharp! (sponsored by ScottishPower) is the dancers, not the dance. Tharp has moulded a company of 11 young performers whose verve and versatility are remarkable. For this talented ensemble she has made — with varying degrees of success — three disparate pieces.

Tharp has collaborated with Philip Glass before and the result, *In the Upper Room*, was one of the most popular ballets of the 1980s. Their latest collaboration, *Heroes*, trades on the energy of their previous work and seeks to find a new context for it. The score, described by the composer as a "symphonic ballet", is a variation on themes from David Bowie and Brian Eno's 1970s recording of the same name. But with its mawkish sentiments and cheap pretensions this is not vintage Glass. Neither is it vintage Tharp. Although she obviously intends some kind of statement about the nature of heroes and heroism, it is too self-conscious and muddled to make its point. This being Tharp, how-

ever, there is much to admire: the struggle between the feisty individual and the selfish ensemble; the constant shift in emotional posture; the palpable unease that subverts the athletic confidence. But it is not enough to make sense of this community of heroes.

Community is also at the core of *Sweet Fields*, which is danced to early American religious choral music, from Shaker hymns to the 18th-century compositions of William Billings. But unlike *Heroes*, in which the community can be violent and unyielding, *Sweet Fields* sings the beauty of a community united in benevolence by its religious fervour. Images of hard work, simple pleasures and even death are imbued with a radiant belief that whatever the travails of a God-fearing life, there is strength and comfort in knowing that you are never alone.

Tharp the Broadway babe is at work in the programme closer, too, a snazzy, creatively lazy bit of show dancing that pays homage to Highway 66, the almost mythic road that cuts across America from Chicago to California. Tharp herself travelled this road as a child when her family moved from Indiana to California, and autobiography permeates her new work, although you do not need to know her family to appreciate the types. Set to "bachelor pad music" from the 1940s and 1950s it illuminates the positivism that propelled thousands along the highway to the American dream.

Best of all, though, is the ongoing duet between Julie Stahl and Andrew Robinson (ex-London Contemporary Dance Theatre). They court like giggling teenagers, quarrel like petulant young lovers and make it up in a highly charged reconciliation. Familiar battle-of-the-sexes stuff from this choreographer, perhaps, but Stahl and Robinson are so jazzy-cool and so sexy-hot that suddenly their lovers' spat gets to the very heart of what Tharp is all about.

DEBRA CRAINE

Patchy Puritanism stolen by scenery

For his first production in Britain, the French director-designer Stéphane Braunschweig has certainly come up with a striking set. It is a vast timbered drum that creaks round to reveal a confusion of splendid platforms and dark, twisted staircases. Beneath are spidery corridors and beside them is a reproduction of Masaccio's *Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden*.

That is an apt image, given that *Measure for Measure* concerns a Puritan attempt to punish disobedient lovers. Indeed, the set as a whole suits a play in which there is plenty of watching, spying and sly manipulation.

But did I also see the Puritan himself, Paul Brennan's Angelo, creeping about with a pair of thick black wings sprouting from his funeral suit? I think

THEATRE

Measure for Measure
Royal Lyceum

I did, and it struck me as the sort of attention-getting yet undeveloped touch that heralds a tricky, tendentious production.

As it turns out, the news from the Lyceum is not that bad. Nevertheless, Braunschweig the director is in patchier form than Braunschweig the designer.

The twin successes of a slow, over-long production, sponsored by the Bank of Scotland, are Brennan's Angelo and the nun he tries to seduce, Lisé Stevenson's Isabella. He is a neat, suspiciously correct

young man who quickly replaces diffidence with the hardness of power; she makes you believe in the energetic, fiery woman beneath the wan-looking novice.

I have never seen more effective treatment of the notoriously difficult scene where Isabella inadvertently bewitches the un-self-aware Angelo. Something about this pale, intense girl, listening so carefully as he engages her in argument, touches the intellectual's underused heart. The words "pray you, begone", usually just a curt dismissal of her plea on behalf of her condemned brother, becomes a protest against a sexual pull he does not care to feel.

Suddenly their faces are inches apart. Suddenly her hands, innocently extended, are near his lips, and their smell hits his nose. The erotic

tension is unacknowledged but palpable — and dramatically as useful as it could be.

Nothing else in the evening is as subtly done, and some things are decidedly unsuited. There are silly jokes, such as having Isabella's mother superior react to the offstage sound of Danny Sapani's *Lucio* as if she were going into orgasm. The mix of costumes — Elbow as PC Plod, an FT-reading *Lucio* in white suit and exotic

fur coat, Pompey as a blend of Druid and Greek philosopher, the rest of the Viennese riff-raff in Jacobean garb — is distracting. But the real problem is Jim Hooper's Duke.

True, the character's conduct does not stand up to modern psychological or political scrutiny. What sort of prince would disguise himself as a friar and watch his deputy reactivate the draconian laws he has ignored? But this does

not mean that a man described as unusually temperate can be reduced to a narcissist who takes glee in playing barny games with his subjects. Shakespeare's Duke has two serious purposes: to expose Puritan hypocrisy and to show that mercy can coexist with justice. Here we feel the full gravity of neither.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE



Lisé Stevenson and Paul Brennan: twin successes of a slow, over-long production

A visit to the past and other countries

VISUAL ART

The only one of the four major National Galleries exhibitions at this year's Edinburgh Festival which is not in some way clearly related to the Scottish art scene is *The Face of Denmark* at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. But even that is part of an exchange which will, later this year, take a show of portraiture in Scotland to Copenhagen. John Russell Taylor writes.

The show covers the history of portraiture in Denmark from 1751 to 1966. Most of the most famous artists, particularly from the early 19th-century "Golden Age" of Danish art, are represented: classical Thorvaldsen busts, comfortably provincial paintings by Eckersberg, Lundbye and Kørbe. Later things fade away: such

late 19th/early 20th-century figures as Kroyer, Lundström and Willumsen are not essentially portrait painters, and the nearer contemporaries are on the whole as lacklustre as their British equivalents, without even an Auerbach or a Freud to lighten things up.

Two of the more interesting shows elsewhere are concerned with Scots in China. At the Royal Museum there is *Precious Cargo*, a three-century history of Scottish involvement with the China trade. The story revolves mostly around the Pearl River delta, where many Scottish traders went to make their way in the world. It is intriguing to find out how many of the important

figures were Scottish, but the real point of the exhibition is to show as many pieces of art as possible while pointing up the influence that Scottish patronage had on export art actually made in China, as well as the influence exerted in Scotland by such examples of Chinese art as found their way there. The effect on local ceramics is particularly striking. The Edinburgh-born photographer John Thomson (1837-

1921), known as "China Thomson", in fact spent only ten years of his early life in the Far East, but the pictures he took then were the making of his professional reputation. *Captured Shadows*, the show at the National Library of Scotland, demonstrates him to have been, consciously or not, the founder of photo-journalism: the pictures of na-

tive peoples from the Straits settlements, never before exhibited, are straight ethnography, and the pictures of Angkor, which he was the first ever to photograph, have aesthetic as well as documentary value. But it is the photographs of Canton and Peking, and the scenes he captured during his great journey up the Yangtze that really grab the imagination.

● The Face of Denmark, in association with the Danish Cultural Institute, is at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery (0131-634 6200) until Aug 31.
● Precious Cargo, sponsored by Cable & Wireless, is at the Royal Museum of Scotland (0131-225 7534) until Jan 4.
● Captured Shadows is at the National Library of Scotland (0131-226 4531) until Sept 28.



The goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel, photographed by Henrik Saxgren, on show in *The Face of Denmark*

DAVID ROSE

EDINBURGH

The Royal Opera gives its second performance of the International Festival of Music at the Edinburgh Festival Theatre, 7.15pm.

In a change to the scheduled programme, the Queen's Hall, the Edinburgh International Festival of Music, presents a programme of songs by Handel, Gluck, Mozart, Salieri and Verdi, accompanied by John Reynolds on the piano. (Edinburgh International Festival Theatre, 7.15pm).

The Festival's extensive number of exhibitions includes A New Look at 1947 — a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War — and the first Edinburgh Festival (Edinburgh International Festival Theatre, 7.15pm).

There is also an exhibition of paintings and watercolours by George Housman (1864-1947) at Bourne Fine Art (0131 557 4038), and paintings by Sue Beards and sculpture by Ian Fyfe at Edinburgh Zoo (0131 334 9171).

The Festival's mammoth line-up includes the Edinburgh Youth Music Theatre's production of *Tim Pan*, which transports the story of Aladdin and the Forty Thieves to a fast-moving, state-of-the-art production. (Edinburgh International Festival Theatre, 7.15pm).

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TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Gillian Mackay

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Who dares wins in feast of virtuosity

Just before the first jazz concert in the newly opened Theatre Brycheiniog, the veteran drummer Jake Hanna walked onto the stage clapping his hands. "Great acoustics," was the verdict, amply proved in his set that followed with pianist Ralph Sutton and Friends. Again and again over the weekend, the theatre showed its suitability for the gentler styles of jazz, like Sutton's small group, or the delicate gypsy guitarist Rapy Lafertia.

Habitues may miss the creaking Guildhall, but now Britain's most diverse and enjoyable jazz festival has a comfortable modern auditorium alongside its vast Market Hall, the quiet intimacy of Christ College, and the various outdoor stages.

Sutton set the mood, for this year's event was as much dominated by pianists and trumpeters as last year's was by tenor saxophonists. The best moments came from those players of either instrument who were prepared to take risks. So splendid as it was to hear the veteran bop pianist Hank Jones in company with the vibraphonist Milt Jackson, their urbane, polished set lacked any of the drama that came from the younger, more exploratory players like Kenny Green and Kenny Werner.

Green has had more than his share of playing slick, urbane sets with the singer Betty Carter and bassist Ray Brown. But once more leading his own trio he gave himself more room to stretch out, and he tried some genuine experiments with pace, metre and timbre in pieces such as his *Montezuma* and *Eisenhower*, where the bizarre contrast implied by two adjacent Californian street names carried over into his musical language.

When the saxophonist Joe Lovano was injured just before the festival, his last-minute replacement with Werner's trio was the Tennessee tenorist Benjie Wallace, and their first meeting was on stage at Brecon. Wallace is in the grand tradition of Sonny Rollins, Eric Dolphy and Ornette Coleman, and his difficult, challenging music brought out some dazzling playing from Werner. As they charged through Wallace's angular fragmented compositions like *Fresh Out*, the adrenalin spilled over

and brought the crowd as well as the band to the edge of their seats. The most unexpected pianist of the weekend was the Cuban trumpeter Arturo Sandoval, who produced an oasis of calm in his frenetic set by sitting at the Steinway for a remarkable workout on *Windmills of Your Mind*. Sandoval's energy as a trumpeter is largely directed into playing the higher, louder and faster than all comers, but whether singing, drumming or producing the festival's only jew's harp solo, he oozes music.

He generates risk and excitement through the technical challenges he sets himself. No brass player could have failed to be impressed by his unusually secure lower register, or his precise articulation in a range so high it is best heard by bats. Sandoval's effortless negotiation of the convoluted harmonies of Coltrane's *Giant Steps* turned it into a facile Latin ditty. While he was reducing the complex to the simple, the New Orleans trumpeter Nicholas Payton was turning the traditions of his city's music into something complex.

Aided by the unblinded virtuoso tenorist Tim Warfield and the remarkable Chicago pianist Anthony Wansley, Payton took old standards like *Lil' Liza Jane* and gave them exhilarating reworkings in the hard bop language of Freddie Hubbard or Lee Morgan. He has tried the idea on CD, but in concert it works better, setting his players the challenge of applying invention to familiar tunes.

In the final Market Hall set, all the strands of risk, polish, invention, composition, trumpet and piano came together, with the UK debut of the Carnegie Hall Jazz Band led by Jon Faddis. Faddis has mainly commissioned new arrangements, so that the band brings its own interpretation to the classic repertoire. With a stream of outstanding soloists and Faddis's trumpet dancing nimbly above the power of his 16-piece band, the Brecon magic worked for yet another year and proved that the best jazz can still bring a couple of thousand people to their feet, roaring and stamping their approval.

ALYN SHIPTON



A last-minute replacement, the Tennessee-based tenor saxophonist Benjie Wallace forged a formidable partnership with Kenny Werner

Deafening roar of Jurassic rockers

mark drowsy whine became a lusty roar as he swung his guitar in all directions and lurched from side to side. For a performer who virtually patented the stationary slouch, this was nothing short of revolutionary.

But most of the show's energy, as ever, derived from the sheer explosive volume of Mase's guitar. Cranked up to a level just below the upper limit of human endurance, his sonic assault was merciless and unremitting. The effect was rather like standing directly behind a jet engine, or witnessing a powerful volcanic eruption at close quarters.

POP

Which was, after all, exactly what this heaving Astoria crowd wanted — because the beauty of Mase's style is in the melodic richness he brings to the elemental violence of his playing, a mesmerising blend of the mellifluous and the abrasive. Like Neil Young, whom he cites as a leading influence, the Dinosaur Jr guitarist combines a seemingly inexhaustible supply of

warm, crafted tunes with a delivery that elevates vandalism to high art. At the Astoria, backed only by his usual spare accompaniment of bass and drums, Mase made his single instrument sound like an entire orchestra of over-heating guitars. Out of this maelstrom mark a few recognisable gems occasionally surfaced. These included *Break Scene*, the looser anthem which brought Dinosaur Jr their first British acclaim ten years ago, and the rocket-powered country rocker *The Wagon*.

This punishing barrage was never less than impressive but

STEPHEN DALTON

ART GALLERIES

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Court of Appeal

Subcontractor can recover award

Co-Operative Wholesale Society Ltd (trading as CWS Engineering Group) v Birse Construction Ltd (formerly Peter Birse Ltd)

Before Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Roch and Lord Justice Phillips

[Judgments July 9]

An arbitrator's final award in a building dispute against the employer and in favour of the contractor, entitled a subcontractor to the award, and the employer was liable to pay the award to the subcontractor.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment dismissing an appeal by the contractor, Birse Construction Ltd, from the order of the arbitrator, QC, sitting Official Referee's jurisdiction in June 1995, that the subcontractor, Co-Operative Wholesale Society Ltd, could rely on an arbitrator's award to recover from the contractor sums due for measured works and for loss and expense.

Mr Vivian Ramsey, QC and Mr Jonathan Lee for the contractor, Mr Richard Fernyhough, QC and Mr Robert J. Evans for the subcontractor.

LORD JUSTICE PHILLIPS

said that the appeal, brought pursuant to section 23 of the Arbitration Act 1979, required the court to construe two JCT standard form contracts to determine the effect of an award in an arbitration between employer and contractor on the liability of the contractor to a nominated subcontractor.

The appellant was the main contractor for the construction between 1987 and 1988 of a shopping centre at Dalston under the 1963 edition of the JCT standard form contract.

Dispute arose with the employer, College East Ltd, and in March 1993 the arbitrator, having heard evidence, found that itemised claims by the contractor of some £5 million were proved. His award included the subcontractor's claims of £352,842 in respect of measured works and £774,625 in respect of loss and expense.

Had the employer honoured the award, the contractor would have passed on those two sums to the subcontractor. Unhappily the employer went into liquidation without honouring the award.

In those circumstances the subcontractor claimed to be entitled without further proof to recover the amounts from the contractor, the arbitrator under the sub-contract. Under the JCT form, the contractor agreed to carry out

contract works, which included works which were to be subcontracted to subcontractors nominated by the architect.

While the contractor was contractually liable to perform those works, and entitled to be paid for them, the contractual scheme set out to insulate him from responsibility for them in practice. That was achieved by provisions making the rights and duties of the contractor and the subcontractor back-to-back in relation to the subcontract works and which placed the subcontractor under the instructions of the architect rather than the main contractor.

Lord Justice Dunn had given a helpful summary of the contractual scheme in *Northern Regional Health Authority v Derek Crouch Construction Co Ltd* [1984] 1 QB 644, 661-2.

It was the contractor's case that it was only liable to make payments to the subcontractor under the subcontract (i) pursuant to the issue of a certificate by the architect (clause 11); (ii) where the contractor had failed to honour the regular progress of the subcontract works (clause 8(c)(ii)) and (iii) pursuant to clauses 8(c)(i) and 12 requiring the contractor to account for benefits obtained from the employer that were applicable to

the subcontract works. As it had proved impossible to enforce the award, nothing, said the contractor, was due to the subcontractor.

The judge in considering whether the arbitrator's decision was binding in the arbitration under the subcontract, held that had the award been honoured the contractor would have been bound to pay the subcontractor the latter's share. It had to follow, he said, that the contractor was under the same liability even though the award had not been honoured: the obligation to make the payment could not be conditional on the contractor first being paid by the employer. There was, the judge said, "no condition and the main contractor takes the risk of the employer's insolvency".

Mr Ramsey contended that the contractual scheme was designed to protect the contractor from exposure to the subcontractor in the event of the employer's insolvency. But it was difficult to detect any such policy when the scheme was considered as a whole.

Where one had a chain of contractual rights and liabilities, the party in the middle was normally exposed to the risk of insolvency on the part of the other parties. If the scheme set out to avoid that consequence one would expect it to do so by clear and express provision.

Under the main contract the sole basis on which the contractor was entitled to be paid by the employer was certification by the architect. Thus the main contract provided for the arbitrator's award to replace the architect's certificate.

In awarding the sums in respect of the subcontract works, the arbitrator was reviewing the certificates issued and the decisions made by the architect and awarding the sums which should have been the subject of certificates.

The subcontract made no provision for overriding the decision or certificates of the architect. But Mr Fernyhough was correct in arguing that it was implicit that where, in an arbitration under the main contract, the arbitrator made an award of a sum which should have been certified as due in respect of subcontract works, that sum fell to be treated in the subcontract as a sum duly certified, so that in that respect the award was binding on the subcontract.

The unique scheme of the JCT forms of contract and subcontract had the result that an award of an arbitrator under the main contract directly affected the rights and liabilities of the parties to the subcontract.

Lord Justice Nourse and Lord Justice Roch agreed.

Solicitors: Linklaters & Paines; Allen & Overy.

Forfeiture relief for survivor

Dunbar v Plant
Before Lord Justice Hirst, Lord Justice Phillips and Lord Justice Mummery

[Judgment July 23]

The rule of public policy, the forfeiture rule which precluded a person who had unlawfully killed another from acquiring benefit in consequence of the killing, applied to offences under the Suicide Act 1961, including aiding and abetting a suicide in pursuance of a suicide pact. But where two people were driven to attempt, together, to take their lives and one succeeded, public policy would not normally require either prosecution or forfeiture of the survivor.

It was not appropriate in a case where the executors of the deceased member of the suicide pact were seeking forfeiture of the survivor to decide the issue on the basis of doing justice between the parties. The court had to exercise a broad discretion having regard to all the circumstances. In the instant case the survivor was entitled to relief from forfeiture of the proceeds of an insurance policy taken out for her benefit by the deceased.

The Court of Appeal so held, Lord Justice Mummery dissenting, allowing an appeal by Nantele Dunbar Plant against an order of Judge Howarth in Preston District Registry on December 14, 1995, that £29,159.40, the proceeds of an insurance on the life of the deceased, be paid to the plaintiff, the deceased's father, John Arnold Dunbar, as administrator of his estate.

Miss Plant and Mr Dunbar were engaged to be married and were living together at 25 Staining Avenue, Preston. She had fallen under suspicion of false accounting and theft from her employers and had been threatened with

imprisonment. Facing imminent arrest, she decided to take her own life. Her reaction was that she could not face life without her. They agreed to commit suicide.

That evening they tried to kill themselves by inhaling car exhaust fumes, but the attempt failed. The following morning they made two attempts to hang themselves. On the second attempt, Mr Dunbar had died. Subsequently Miss Plant had cut her throat and wrist and jumped from a window but had survived.

Mr Nigel Manthorpe Thomas for Miss Plant; Mr Peter Crichton-Gold for the administrator.

LORD JUSTICE PHILLIPS said Miss Plant had committed the criminal offence of aiding and abetting Mr Dunbar's suicide. There were questions as to whether the commission of that offence brought into operation the forfeiture rule and if it did whether the manner in which the judge exercised the discretion granted by the forfeiture Act 1982 was open to attack.

The forfeiture rule was an example of a wider principle that a person could not benefit from his own criminal act. Not every criminal act would bring the principle into play.

It was of comparatively recent origin in relation to unlawful killing, having been devised to fill the gaps left by the abolition of criminal forfeiture, the repeal of civil impediments to suing and the reduction and final abolition of the death penalty.

The rule had always been applied in cases of murder, including suicide pacts and in *Hall v Knight* and *Baxter (JH & P)*, the Court of Appeal had no doubt that it applied to a person convicted of manslaughter.

But there had since been significant changes reflecting public appreciation of the different degrees of culpability that attended conduct that used to be designated as murder.

The Homicide Act 1957 had abolished constructive malice, and provided for a manslaughter verdict in cases of diminished responsibility or provocation. It also provided that the survivor of a suicide pact was guilty of manslaughter rather than murder. Aiding, abetting, counselling or procuring another's suicide became a separate indictable offence, not manslaughter, by the Suicide Act 1961.

It was hard to see any logical basis for not applying the rule to all cases of manslaughter, where ex hypothesi the guilty person had caused the death of another by criminal conduct.

But the harshness of applying the forfeiture rule inflexibly to all cases of manslaughter in all circumstances was such that, absent the changes brought about by statute, the rule could not have survived unvaried to the present day. The rule was a judge-made rule to give effect to what was perceived as public policy at the time of its formulation.

His Lordship believed that but for the intervention of Parliament, the judge themselves would have modified the rule. The only logical way of doing so would have been to decline to apply it in cases where the facts of the crime involved such a low degree of culpability, or such a high degree of mitigation, that the sanction of forfeiture, far from giving effect to the public interest, would have been contrary to it.

The Forfeiture Act had given the court a greater degree of flexibility

than could have been achieved by judicial modification of the rule. His Lordship could see no reason now for the court to attempt to modify the forfeiture rule. The appropriate course where the rule appeared to conflict with the ends of justice was to exercise the powers given by the Forfeiture Act.

In his Lordship's view, Mr Justice Peter Gibson had wrongly decided not to apply the rule in *Re H (Deceased)* [1990] 1 FLR 441, a case of manslaughter by reason of diminished responsibility. The judge in that case ought to have held the rule applied but that in the circumstances the plaintiff should be relieved of its effect.

The rule did apply in cases of aiding and abetting suicide as was clear from section 1(2) of the Forfeiture Act. The Act gave a clear indication that the circumstances in which the offence was committed might be such that the public interest did not demand the imposition of any penal sanction. A suicide pact was likely to fall into that category.

Where two people were driven to try and take their own lives and one survived, the survivor would normally attract sympathy rather than prosecution.

Whether the fact was rational or irrational the public interest would not normally call for the prosecution of or forfeiture should one party survive. In such circumstances the appropriate approach was likely to be to give total relief against forfeiture, although of course that would not always be the case.

The judge had indicated that his approach was "to do justice between the parties". That was not the appropriate approach.

The discretion was a broad one, and it was legitimate to have regard to all the consequences of the order, but it was not right to approach the exercise of the discretion as if dealing simply with an inter partes dispute.

The desperation which had led Miss Plant to decide to take her own life was an irrational and tragic reaction to her predicament. The nature of her conduct did not alter what should be the normal approach, namely full relief from forfeiture.

The assets in the case were in no way derived from Mr Dunbar's family. They were the fruits of insurance, the result of Mr Dunbar for Miss Plant's benefit. The judge had rightly described the consequence for the family of the forfeiture rule as an unwelcome windfall. The appeal would be allowed so as to grant full relief from forfeiture.

Lord Justice Hirst agreed. Lord Justice Mummery gave a dissenting judgment.

Solicitors: Hart Reed & Co, Eastbourne; Mendelsohn, Manchester.

Commercial solution to rent review problem in lease

Dukemister (Ebbgate House One) Ltd v Somerset Property Co Ltd (formerly Gateway Properties Ltd)

Before Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Henry and Lord Justice Swinton Thomas

[Judgment July 29]

A commercial solution had to be found to a problem posed by a rent review provision in a lease of warehouse premises that was stated to operate by reference to a valuation of national premises but which failed to specify where those national premises were to be situated. In the absence of clear words the provision was to be construed so as to produce a valuation that was not substantially higher or lower than any that could reasonably have been intended.

The Court of Appeal so held in reserved judgments so held allowing an appeal by Somerset Property Co Ltd, the tenant of a distribution warehouse of 250,000 square feet on the Overross Industrial Estate at Ross-on-Wye, from the judgment of Mr Michael Hart, QC, sitting as a deputy judge of the Chancery Division in March 1996, in favour of the landlord.

Dukemister (Ebbgate House One) Ltd

Mr Simon Berry, QC and Mr Andrew P. D. Walker for the tenants; Mr Roger Ellis, QC, for the landlord.

LORD JUSTICE NOURSE said that by an underlease dated April 28, 1985, the landlord demised the premises to the tenant for a term of 25 years at an annual rent, subject to five-yearly reviews, of £855,000. Future rent was to be ascertained by reference to "national premises" defined as "a warehouse unit within a 35-mile radius of Ross-on-Wye".

The difficulty was that that definition did not specify where within the 35-mile radius the national premises were to be located.

The judge explained that "the circle described by that radius includes areas which show a wide variety in rental levels". He went on to hold that such "national premises" were to mean a warehouse "in such location within a 35-mile radius of Ross-on-Wye as the landlord shall select".

But there was no justification for the wording of the judge's definition. What then was to be done? The exhortation of Lord Justice

Brightman in *The Law Land Co Ltd v Consumers Association Ltd* [1980] 2 EGLR 109, 112 to find a commercial solution to the problem had to be followed. And in so doing it was to be borne in mind that all rent review provisions, even those which operated by reference to a valuation of national premises, operated in a real world and not in one of fantasy.

Thus, in the absence of clear words, national premises could not be taken to be such as to produce a valuation, whether it be too high or too low, which could not reasonably have been intended to apply to the actual premises.

Applying that principle to the problem, there was only one intention that could be imputed to the parties that would pass the test of reasonableness.

The difference in rental values being attributable to differences in location, it could only reasonably have been intended that the national warehouse should be situated in a location comparable to the site of the premises in Ross-on-Wye.

Lord Justice Henry and Lord Justice Swinton Thomas agreed.

Solicitors: Linklaters & Paines; Allen & Overy.

Proving evasion of excise duty on liquor imports

Regina v Travers
Before Lord Justice Waller, Mr Justice Gage and Mr Justice Bennett

[Judgment July 9]

In a prosecution under section 170 of the Customs and Excise Management Act 1979 for fraudulent evasion of excise duty, in order to establish that goods were dutiable there was no requirement to show that more than the quantities set out in the Schedule to article 53 of the Excise Duties (Personal Relief) Order (SI 1992 No 3155), were intended to be imported, and there was no requirement, if more than those quantities were being imported, to establish that the Customs and Excise were not satisfied that the purpose was for personal use.

The Court of Appeal, Criminal Division, so held in a reserved judgment dismissing the appeal of Kelvin Travers against his conviction at Canterbury Crown Court (Judge Langdon and a jury) on a single count of conspiracy to evade excise duty on imported beer and wine.

Mr Clive Stanbrook, QC, who did not appear before, and Mr Nigel Van Der Bijl, assigned by the Registrar of Criminal Appeals, for the appellant; Mr Gerald Barling, QC and Mr Anthony Webb for the Crown.

LORD JUSTICE WALLER said that it was alleged that the appellant and six others operated a scheme to import substantial quantities of beer and wine on cheap duty trips to France pretend-

ing, if asked, that they were for personal use, whereas they intended to resell for a commercial purpose in the United Kingdom.

Article 53 of the 1992 Order provided for an assumption in favour of commercial purpose by virtue of quantity. However, it could at best be relied on as providing a presumption evidence. It did not form part of the fundamental question whether goods were dutiable at all.

The proper course was, as was done here, to concentrate simply on establishing beyond a reasonable doubt that goods were being imported for a commercial purpose, without any presumption flowing from quantities.

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RECEPTION SELECTION

How developers win consent

Christine Webb
talks to the experts
about the way to
approach projects
in sensitive areas

Rod Bryant disliked the new development being planned for his village, and said so. The developer, Crosby Homes, not only listened to his suggestions, but those of other villagers, too, then incorporated them in a redesign.

As a result there were no major objections to the plan, so it zipped through the local authority planning committee in six months flat, which would be quite an achievement in an average country town.

But Mr Bryant lives in the historic Cotswold village of Broadway — just the kind of place our planning laws are best at protecting. And the development of 11 houses by Crosby is in the middle of the old village, leading off the much-photographed High Street.

It is so difficult to get consent in historic towns and villages that developers go to great lengths to avoid provoking objections, which can prompt a planning refusal.

In Broadway, Crosby carried out its own public consultation exercise, inviting interested parties, including local conservation groups and parish councillors such as Mr Bryant, to comment on their plans.

Mr Bryant, who runs a private hire car business, says: "We didn't like the first plan for 15 houses, which was too many. I also wanted reclaimed stone to be used to face the first house to front the high street so that it would blend in. Crosby was very helpful. It came back with a second set of plans which were brilliant, and they'd listened. Not many developers do."

The company held a second public meeting to present the new scheme. And Jinks, the land director of Crosby Homes Midlands, says: "The same people came along and said that if it went forward, they would support our planning application. We are now doing consultation exercises in other conservation areas; for example, at Edgbaston in Birmingham, where we are developing a site in an area of outstanding Edwardian houses. We held two public meetings in the local golf club, listened



A proposal by Crosby Homes for Cotswold stone houses in the conservation village of Broadway in Hereford and Worcester

to what local residents said, and got planning consent."

Some property developers now specialise in "tricky" historic towns. Future Heritage says it has never refused in all its 11 years. So what does Mr Green suggest is the best approach to gaining planning consent in an historic town?

"We take a consultative rather than a confrontational approach," he says. "The problem comes when you try to achieve a degree of consistency: it's hard to know whether a planning officer in Cheltenham will think the same as the officer in, say, Bath or Chester because there are subjective elements."

What happens if there is a disagreement between planners and developers? It took McCarthy & Stone more than two years to gain planning permission for a sheltered housing scheme and new narrowboat facilities at the Kennet and Avon Canal, on a corner of Bathwick Street, Bath. The £3.5 million joint scheme with British Waterways drew a difference of opinion between the developer, which considered the scheme should fit in with the classical

architecture on Bathwick Hill, and the planners, who thought that it should echo the style of the canal-side cottages.

A scheme for 60 flats was turned down in 1995, partly because the planners felt it was an over-development and because of its scale. The developer talked to English Heritage, the Bath Preservation Trust and Bathwick Hill Residents Association, and a new scheme was drawn up, this time for 49 sheltered apartments; but the planning officers were not persuaded.

The scheme went to a planning appeal and the planning inspector allowed it, saying: "The development of this relatively large and conspicuous site would clearly alter the existing character and appearance of this part of the conservation area. However, there would be some enhancement of the townscape and the canal environment, and I believe that the proposals would not have a harmful effect on the character or appearance of the area."

Gary Day, director of the Planning Bureau, the developers' planning consultancy, says: "Our

experience in Bath was the most serious difficulty we've had. We did not expect an easy ride, but we had respected the sensitivity of the site."

Rob McLennan, senior planner with Lyons & Sleeman & Hoare, of Hartley Wintney, Hampshire, which specialises in historic centres and is so in demand it has expanded from 40 to 120 employees in the past three years, says: "If you have a job in an historic town, the softly, softly approach from the beginning and seeing as many people as you can before you apply is the way to go. If you don't do that, it takes six months longer."

"These days, there are more groups with an interest in new residential development. The longer time goes on, the more expertise these groups build up. So it's important that they are party to your proposals. You need all the competing groups pulling in the right direction."

Prices at Crosby Homes' development range from £100,000 to £215,000. Agents: Knight Frank (01852 79007 and 01789 29753); McCarthy & Stone (0820 919132).

"Everybody should be party to your ideas"

Another useful tip is not to play music if you live in a quiet area: that way, you enhance the peacefulness.

Mr Goldberg advises against asking too many financial questions. He says: "More questions are more easily asked by a middleman. Above all, he adds, do not dwell on any negative factors, especially in the first five minutes. 'If someone has had trouble parking, the worst thing you can do is start talking about it,' he says. 'Instead, say something like, 'Come inside, we can talk about the parking later', and just soothe over that issue. Once inside, show them the lovely fireplace and the south-facing garden."

"When you have someone's interest, they are already trying to compromise on the problems."

Put your best sq ft forward

If the bedroom is the best room in your home, that is what buyers should see first, says Heather Grant

The first five minutes in which a prospective buyer views your house are probably the most critical. The initial "feel" of a property is what instinctively makes someone attracted or otherwise, and once they have made a decision, they are unlikely to change.

"If you don't capture somebody's interest quickly, they are probably not going to buy that house, so it is important that you immediately point out the benefits," advises Marc Goldberg of Hamptons International. "Less attractive parts of the house or things that are not necessarily features should come later."

So plan the route of your guided tour in advance. Do not show understair cupboards and lavatories just because you walk past them first: head straight for the most impressive room. If the garden is the main draw, show the rear reception room that looks on to it.

The house or flat should be clean and neat, to give an impression of space, a major selling point.

It may be a bore to have to tidy up before each appointment, but showing your property at its best is an essential part of marketing. Even the largest of living rooms can look cramped if cluttered.

The interior designer Nina Campbell, who spent months house-hunting before finding the home that she has recently moved into, thinks that aroma also influences people.

She explains: "I found it very off-putting to walk into a house and smell stale cooking. My mother was a great mover, and when she was showing her house there were always flowers, and a bath essence poured down all the drains."

"If you walk into a bathroom and there is a delicious smell of rose geraniums, it is rather pleasant. Whereas if you walk in

and there are damp clothes hanging up, and grubby old towels, it is depressing."

Prospective buyers can be put off even before they step inside. Hilary Wade of Winkworth says: "People drive up and look at the front, and if you've got a few dead, straggly plants or peeling paint, their hearts will sink."

"Plants and fresh flowers make a big difference; they raise people's spirits. A dead plant will have the opposite effect."

Striking up conversation is also recommended, so that you can establish what buyers want and not waste anyone's time. If they are new to the area, they may be unaware of nearby schools and parks, which could be a bigger priority for them than room sizes.

Miss Wade suggests approaching people on a personal level to make them feel relaxed. "It is," she says, "best to let people just wander about, and to come up with a bit of advice and helpful hints or to answer a few questions when you are asked."

Another useful tip is not to play music if you live in a quiet area: that way, you enhance the peacefulness.

Mr Goldberg advises against asking too many financial questions. He says: "More questions are more easily asked by a middleman. Above all, he adds, do not dwell on any negative factors, especially in the first five minutes. 'If someone has had trouble parking, the worst thing you can do is start talking about it,' he says. 'Instead, say something like, 'Come inside, we can talk about the parking later', and just soothe over that issue. Once inside, show them the lovely fireplace and the south-facing garden."

"When you have someone's interest, they are already trying to compromise on the problems."



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GOLF

Parnevik happy to be second

BY JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT

JESPER PARNEVIK, a nice man who has his priorities neatly in order, seems destined to go through life just missing the big prizes. Five times this year in tournaments in the United States and Britain, the 32-year-old Swede has been runner-up. Now, a place in the Ryder Cup team seems likely to be denied him.

Although he eats volcano dust and jumps into icy lakes as a self-inflicted punishment for playing badly, he does not rival Mac O'Grady for sheer daftness or, as P.G. Wodehouse might have said, "at presenting every outward appearance of a man who is engagingly dotty, who in some departments of the human physiology and physiognomy might be considered to be not quite all there".

O'Grady took 17 attempts at the qualifying school before he won his card. He lived in a cardboard box in a garage for a year. At a recent tournament, he played the first round hitting his woods right-handed and his irons left-handed. O'Grady once said: "I want to climb into a volcano and be at one with the lava." O'Grady talks in sentences that are almost impossible to under-

stand — in part because they last for five minutes.

Parnevik talks regulation professional speak. Phrases such as "I played good", "I took driver", "I putted great" spring easily from his lips. More and more these days, he talks about continually finishing second — most recently in the Open — and what he thinks will happen about the Europe Ryder Cup team.

"A lot of players say that winning is everything," Parnevik said as he prepared for the US PGA Championship at the Winged Foot club, New York. "I think that sends the wrong message, especially to kids, because that takes the whole idea of the game away. I mean, if winning is everything, 95 per cent of the field don't even have to teep on Sunday. They can stay in bed."

"To me, just to have been there is worth it, just to have had the chance to win the British Open is amazing. You have to keep everything in perspective. I play because I love playing the game. I really enjoy being there and having a chance."

These are the words of a contented man, one who appears to be less tortured than



Parnevik, twice runner-up in the Open, now faces Ryder Cup disappointment

many golfers. In this case, Parnevik may be better suited than most to deal with the rebuff he is likely to receive when Severiano Ballesteros makes his two selections for next month's Europe Ryder Cup team.

"You know Seve's going to pick Olly (José María Olazábal)," Nick Faldo said, "so that leaves me and Jesper. I wouldn't like to miss out. I've done ten straight Ryder Cups and I want to do it, to set another record. I have had a second, third and fourth in three European events this

year and I won in Los Angeles. I would have thought, on paper, that my credentials are pretty good."

Better than Parnevik's by far, although the Swede lies seventh on the United States money list. "Today, when golf is a worldwide game — and soon we might be having a world tour — it is tough with the selection system we have now," Parnevik said.

"I would like the system they have in any other sports. If it's soccer, ice hockey or baseball, they pick the best players at that time, whoever

is playing best when the tournament comes around."

Yet such a system is not in place. Instead, it looks as though Ballesteros will have to decide between Faldo and Parnevik when he announces his team on September 1. His reasoning will be that if the Ryder Cup hangs on one match and the player representing Europe is either Faldo or Parnevik, then he will go for Faldo, who has won six major championships, rather than Parnevik, who has won none. Once again, Parnevik will have come second.

SAILING

Tense finish as Italians strive to repel late charge

BY EDWARD GORMAN, SAILING CORRESPONDENT

THE Champagne Mumm's Admiral's Cup was coming to a tense conclusion in Plymouth last night with Italy fighting off a late charge by the unflinched Australians in their attempt to retain the title that they snatched from the United States in the Fastnet Race two years ago.

A satellite fix on the fleet early last night, as the leading big boats headed towards The Lizard and an overnight finish at Plymouth, showed the Italians holding a lead of fewer than three points equivalent to one Fastnet place — over the resurgent Australians.

For much of the day, the top of the table was being disputed by Italy, the United States and Germany, but a gain of four places from fourth to first by Colin Beashel in the Australian ILC 40, G'Net, propelled Australia into contention. The Americans have suffered once again in the Fastnet, having slipped from first overall to third at the beginning of the final run.

Italy have held the lead in the championship since the opening stage of the Fastnet on Saturday, with the big boat, *Madina Milano*, skippered by Francesco de Angelis, ahead in her class and the ILC 40, *Brava Q8*, skippered by Enrico Chieffi, leading in her fleet until Beashel pushed her back into

second place yesterday. The Mumm 36, *Breva*, skippered by Tommaso Chieffi, has been the weakest of the three. For the Great Britain team, the latter stages of the race have witnessed a frustrating pattern, with the two bigger boats both holding fourth in class or worse. This has consigned the team to fifth place overall, with only the hapless New Zealanders and Scandinavians behind them.

The success story so far, however, has been the Mumm 36, *Breva*, skippered by John Merricks, which dominated her class virtually from the start of the Fastnet and was on course for a class win. While the Admiral's Cup fleet was playing out the last moves in the nine-race series, the fastest monohulls among the total of 247 boats taking part in the Fastnet Race were crossing the finish line off the breakwater in Plymouth Harbour. Line honours went to Ross Field at the wheel of the Ericsson 80, *Banque Internationale d'Luxembourg*, which had earlier been first round the Fastnet Rock.

Field held off Ludde Ingvalds's *Nicorette* in a close match race back to the Scillies, when the two huge sloops were never more than a couple of minutes apart, before crossing the line ten minutes ahead of him, just before Sam. Among the other

early finishers was Hasso Plattner's IMS maxi, *Morning Glory*, which was third on the water with its mast intact, and Yves Parlier's *Vendée* boat, *Aquitaine Innovations*, which was sixteenth on the water, with the renowned French yachtsman, Eric Taberly, among her crew.

The real interest, however, was in the performance of the new *Whitbread 60* fleet, for which the Fastnet was the first and last test of the new boat speed in the crews before the round-the-world race starts on September 21. On this evidence, an exciting and close-fought contest is in store, with as many as six boats showing the potential to win.

After 605 miles of racing, which saw light air upwind and some bristling reaching in up to 20 knots, the first five boats — all Bruce Farr designs — finished within 14 minutes of each other. First was Grant Dalton's *Merit Cup*, with Chris Dickson's *Toshiba* second two minutes later, followed by Swedish *Krantz*, skippered by Gunnar Krantz, a further three minutes back and then Britain's *Lawrie Smith in Silk Cut*, a total of ten minutes behind Dalton. Fifth was George Collins's *Cheshire Racing*. There was a gap of 24 minutes to Paul Cayard, in *EF Langmuir*, who seemed the most dissatisfied of the top skippers.

THE LEADING 100 ENTRIES IN THE TIMES INTERACTIVE TEAM CRICKET



Pos	Team (player's name)	Pts
1	M J S I (M Square)	21476
2	Wandsworth House 3 (R O'Brien)	21408
3	How And Joe (H Jones)	21388
4	Orchard M & O (N Jones)	21389
5	Neil's Impassable (J Johnson)	21144
6	Purvis (W Clarke)	21137
7	Dave's Dependable (D Tait)	21110
8	Fantasy Formik E (G Clutchley)	21037
9	Kal's Corfers 4 (N Kell)	21033
10	The Team (B Colclough)	20946
11	Darius Dynamos (M D Shepherd)	20967
12	Daves Dosses (D Tait)	20944
13	Wells Fargo (BE Howe)	20938
14	Acid All Rounders (A Kell)	20938
15	Rob's Barry Army (R Anderson)	20870
16	Lamar Old Boys (P Tranter)	20856
17	Fantasy Formik I (G Clutchley)	20846
18	Bacardi Boys (W Woodley)	20820
19	All Rounders X (M Clutchley)	20785
20	The Runners (D Tait)	20785
21	Off Spicers in A (A Kell)	20778
22	Venue Village No	20759
23	All Round All (W Burnett)	20757
24	The Bunch Played On (R Hoad)	20642
25	The Funtley Monkeys (A Moss)	20620

Pos	Team (player's name)	Pts
26	Coleraine Bulls (D Blackburn)	20607
27	Friday Night XI (B Clutchley)	20577
28	Bulls Team (Hower)	20571
29	Neil's Impassable (J Johnson)	20568
30	Sims The Man 5 (G Sampson)	20560
31	Diamond White (R White)	20558
32	Spide Thomas (E Webb)	20545
33	Pauline's Stars (M P Howell)	20517
34	Old Whingetons (T Hillman)	20506
35	Three Lobs (P Johnson)	20504
36	Windy's Warriors (G Miller)	20446
37	Injury Free XI (J Hunt)	20443
38	J S W 256 (G Swales)	20438
39	Hurst Club (R Jackson)	20418
40	14 Lobs (P Johnson)	20379
41	Websters Post (G Evans)	20377
42	Sam's The Man 3 (G Sampson)	20376
43	Basil's Bashers (S Moore)	20367
44	Fantasy Formik D (G Clutchley)	20368
45	The Sunshine Band (J Shepherd)	20330
46	Saracens (R Kettle)	20330
47	Teddy 2 (B Bare)	20307
48	Huntshire (A Frost)	20306
49	Dave's Dynamos (D Tait)	20304
50	Ken's First XI (K Hannah)	20297

Pos	Team (player's name)	Pts
51	Retirement Hero's (M Putnam)	20272
52	Fantasy Formik H (G Clutchley)	20272
53	No More Fridays (R B Ellis)	20270
54	The Braughing Duck (P Moore)	20233
55	Ken's Best (D Geography)	20230
56	Roe Roe Roe (R R R)	20228
57	Philosophical (P Shorter)	20210
58	S R S In The Press (S Venn)	20208
59	Todd's A Luckless	20189
60	Four in the Press (P Johnson)	20189
61	The Flowering Men (D Blackburn)	20181
62	Melvin Melton XI (D Wray)	20184
63	James C C (J Clutchley)	20178
64	Wood's Warriors (D Wood)	20169
65	1997 XI (M J M Hadden)	20165
66	Cole Eyes (M Marchant)	20139
67	Eddie Woo (A Luckless)	20139
68	Rug Catchers (A Rose)	20098
69	Shane's Eleven (M Sharp)	20090
70	Shadow Leader (D Finkley)	20078
71	Tony Boys (G Jackson)	20078
72	Sudbrook Park (C Wray)	20068
73	Kamukawa Bowler (D Finley)	20061
74	Dave's Dynamos (D Tait)	20054
75	Legionnaires (A Hume)	20027

Pos	Team (player's name)	Pts
76	M W B F I C (R McClelland)	20011
77	D J S 2 (D Finkley)	19978
78	Off A Good Start (J Scales)	19971
79	James Boys One (M Jones)	19955
80	Barnes Boys (E Howe)	19948
81	The Red Team (J Scales)	19938
82	Alma Angels (A Wood)	19920
83	Three Stars (R Aylmer)	19912
84	Friday Night Home (L Ellis)	19892
85	May's Eleven (S Simpson)	19871
86	Points Galore (D Finkley)	19873
87	Ward's Wicketkeepers (AB Ward)	19863
88	Thames Dancers (M D C)	19848
89	John's Eleven (J Scales)	19848
90	Archie's Eleven (J Scales)	19843
91	Delta's Eleven (S Lamb)	19840
92	Bartholomew (A Bartholomew)	19831
93	Hollyhocks (M Ward)	19820
94	Freddie's Eleven (J Scales)	19815
95	Delta's Eleven (S Lamb)	19810
96	Delta's Eleven (S Lamb)	19809
97	Delta's Eleven (S Lamb)	19808
98	P Power	19807
99	Hollyhocks (M Ward)	19803
100	The Walford Warriors (J Scales)	19800

INTERACTIVE TEAM CRICKET SCOREBOARD

The scores in the first four columns cover the past week: the final column is the player's overall points. The figures include all matches completed by August 10. Overall players are shown in bold type. Rising Stars in *italic*.

Player (no) Runs Wkts C/SR Bonus Weekly Overall

Batsmen (001-145)

Category A

C J Adams (001) 0 0 0 0 1770

G F Archer (002) 0 0 0 0 1770

M A Atherton (003) 0 0 0 0 1770

C W J Atherton (004) 0 0 0 0 1770

R J Bailey (005) 0 0 0 0 1770

J J Barnes (006) 0 0 0 0 1770

D J Bicknell (007) 0 0 0 0 1770

D S Blomfield (008) 0 0 0 0 1770

C C Broom (009) 0 0 0 0 1770

P D Bowler (010) 0 0 0 0 1770

A D Brown (011) 0 0 0 0 1770

M A Burchett (012) 0 0 0 0 1770

P A Cobby (013) 0 0 0 0 1770

P J Crawley (014) 0 0 0 0 1770

M J Curren (015) 0 0 0 0 1770

M T G Elliott (016) 0 0 0 0 1770

N H Farnworth (017) 0 0 0 0 1770

J E G Gifford (018) 0 0 0 0 1770

M W Gifford (019) 0 0 0 0 1770

G A Gooch (020) 0 0 0 0 1770

M L Hayden (021) 0 0 0 0 1770

D H Hogg (022) 0 0 0 0 1770

G A Hick (023) 0 0 0 0 1770

A J Holbrook (024) 0 0 0 0 1770

N Hussain (025) 0 0 0 0 1770

S P James (026) 0 0 0 0 1770

M A Jones (027) 0 0 0 0 1770

J H Kallis (028) 0 0 0 0 1770

N V Knight (029) 0 0 0 0 1770

S L Lacey (030) 0 0 0 0 1770

M N Lafferty (031) 0 0 0 0 1770

O D Lloyd (032) 0 0 0 0 1770

M B Lloyds (033) 0 0 0 0 1770

M P Maynard (034) 0 0 0 0 1770

A McShane (035) 0 0 0 0 1770

T R Montague (036) 0 0 0 0 1770

T M Moody (037) 0 0 0 0 1770

H Morris (038) 0 0 0 0 1770

D D Moun (039) 0 0 0 0 1770

Player (no) Runs Wkts C/SR Bonus Weekly Overall

Batsmen (001-145)

Category A

S Hudson (005) 0 0 0 0 1770

P Johnson (006) 0 0 0 0 1770

M Keogh (007) 0 0 0 0 1770

S K Kallis (008) 0 0 0 0 1770

R A Kallisborough (009) 0 0 0 0 1770

A K Khan (010) 0 0 0 0 1770

D A Letherdale (011) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (012) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (013) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (014) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (015) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (016) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (017) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (018) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (019) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (020) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (021) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (022) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (023) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (024) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (025) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (026) 0 0 0 0 1770

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N J Latham (041) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (042) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (043) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (044) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (045) 0 0 0 0 1770

N J Latham (046) 0 0 0 0 1770

Player (no) Runs Wkts C/SR Bonus Weekly Overall

Batsmen (001-145)

Category A

P A Strong (017) 0 0 0 0 1770

M T Tolley (018) 0 0 0 0 1770

W M Allen (019) 0 0 0 0 1770

M W Allen (020) 0 0 0 0 1770

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

SCOREBOARD

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Medieval monks, multitudes of mammaries

Brother Elric was having trouble with "unworthy thoughts." Later in the evening I fully expected to run into similar breast-anal, but more of breasts anon. For the moment, it was time to concentrate on the going-on in medieval Shrewsbury. Habits on, tresses shaved... it was time for Cadfael (TV).

Where Brother Elric was still having trouble with unworthy thoughts, Brother Cadfael, who before he became a monk of the cloth was a man of the world, so knows about such things, tried to console him. "Brother, you use extravagant terms for feelings that are wholly human and natural. But Elric would not be cheered. He had gazed upon Mistress Perle's snood and was much taken with it. 'Hard though I struggle, I can think of nothing else.'"

To be fair to the tortured Elric, Mistress Perle's charms did not

stop at a splendid snood. She was young, blonde, rich and recently widowed, which even in the 12th century was a fairly winning combination. As a result she was being vigorously pursued by most of the single men of Salop, although they might have shown a little less vigour had they known that she — with the help of Cadfael's herbal preparation — had given her dying husband a little help along the way.

Consumed with grief, she gifted the matrimonial home to the abbey in exchange for a single white rose to be cut and delivered on the first of July. As fate would have it, it was Elric, who as one of Cadfael's ever-changing retinue of young undergardeners must have known how to make it to the second commercial break, who got the cutting and delivery job. Sure enough, within minutes, Elric was found dead by his lady's rose bush.

Had he been around 400 years later, Abbot Radulfus might have begun: "Alas, poor Elric, I knew him well..." But this was 11th-century, so he didn't. "From love to despair," he observed, "it is but a short step further to the most unlikely of temptations." It took me a couple of seconds to work out he was talking about suicide.

By the time I caught up, Cadfael had moved on again. There was no rain on Elric's habit and no blood on his hands. You don't mean...? Cadfael most certainly did. And look, here was a perfect imprint of the murderer's medieval boot. "A little warm wax, a steady hand and we have him by the heel."

Derek Jacobi is one of the few actors in the world who can get away with lines like that. Others are less fortunate, particularly those whose job it is to deliver one line of medieval dialogue and then fade

REVIEW



Matthew Bond

into the grubby background again. "Cousin Judith — what is your opinion of this new wool?" looked to be a particular stinker until we discovered that its deliverer was actually the murderer. Served him right, then.

What Jacobi has realised and others have not is that a period dialogue is not always in verse and this is television not Stratford-upon-Avon. Less is more and in

one or two cases it is an awful lot less that is required. Mind you, it's not all the actors' fault if they've got confused. The series does have a curiously theatrical style to it, where the rather contrived medieval bustle stops while the principal actors deliver their lines and then starts again when they have finished.

Still, it's different, ambitious and Jacobi is in it — which makes three big pluses. If they could just make Hungary look a bit more like the Shropshire I know and love, it could be very good indeed.

If they could have just made breasts look a little less like... well, breasts, I might have enjoyed Meema Spadola's film, *Breasts* (Channel 4), a bit more. Unworthy thoughts, it is quick to realise, were not going to be a problem after Spadola had persuaded 22 New York women to take their tops off and talk serious tits. Instead, the prevailing sense

was one of exclusion, akin to the feeling that every man has experienced when told that the apparently fascinating conversation that stopped the second he arrived was "girls' talk." This, I suspect, was girls' television and, taking a wild guess, quite good girls' television at that, hampered only slightly by the fact that it was also American.

There were breasts in abundance and diversity. Big, small, old, young, pert, droopy, diseased, augmented: they were all there, including perhaps the saddest breasts I have ever seen, belonging to a deluded stripper who believed her surgically enhanced pair were God's gift to man. I can't even think of a joke to describe what they looked like, but I hoped her surgeon had paid his professional indemnity insurance.

At the other end of the scale was a dancer and former vice-president of her school's itty-bitty-fitty com-

mince (they impeached the president after she came back from college with a boob job). She was also our resident Lolita "when the lights are off and you catch me in the right mood." No, I'm sorry, I'm not even going to entertain an unworthy thought. Not with so many women watching.

A far less embarrassing time was spent in the company of David Attenborough, who for one night only appeared to have had borrowed the *Jacques* format for *Wildlife on One* (BBC1). Piranha — pah! Bunch of softies, half of them are vegetarians, others are cowardly parasites who live by taking cowardly chunks out of other fishes' tails.

It's only the red-bellied variety you have to worry about, and then only if you're a great white egret chick without two brain cells to rub together. Bet that's gone down well on the set of the new James Bond film.

- BBC1**
- 6.00am Business Breakfast (53131)
 - 7.00am BBC Breakfast News (7) (50771)
 - 9.00am Breakfast News Extra (7) (524868)
 - 9.20am Ready, Steady, Cook (7) (537085)
 - 9.50am EastEnders: The changing roles of grandmothers (7) (524868)
 - 10.20am Put It to the Test (5231416)
 - 10.45am Carol Cooper's Cooking with Confidence (2123110)
 - 11.00am News (7) and weather (2067961)
 - 11.05am Due South (7) (4137892)
 - 11.50am Good Neighbours (5826435)
 - 12.00am News (7) (4632961)
 - 12.05pm Wipeout (7) (8728665)
 - 12.30pm Neighbours (7) (1123435)
 - 1.00pm News (7) and weather (73059)
 - 1.30pm Regional News (5816752)
 - 1.40pm Columbo: Candidates for Crime (1973) The murder of an election campaign manager (7) (4162416)
 - 3.10pm Quincey (7) (1944884)
 - 4.00pm Popeye (2029139) 4.10pm Thundercats (2018023) 4.20pm Morph TV with Tony Hart (2509661) 4.30pm Prince of Atlantis (5997400) 4.50pm Newsround. Saving homeless dogs living on India's streets from almost certain death (7) (2621481) 5.10pm Bright Sparks. A 16-year-old car designer (3572394)
 - 5.35pm Neighbours (7) (417597)
 - 6.00pm News (7) and weather (533)
 - 6.30pm Regional News (416)
 - 7.00pm Big Break Stars of the Future: Jim Davidson puts aspiring teenage snooker stars through their paces (7) (2394)
 - 7.30pm TV Times Machine: The remarkable success of the "Stammer Janner" (7) (400)
 - 8.00pm The National Lottery Live Carol Smilie welcomes Michael Jackson's support group Human Nature (7) (234065)
 - 8.15pm Selection Box: Stars of a Festival. Celebrities pick their favourite moments from the Essex gig (7) (709688)
 - 8.50pm Points of View Presented by Anne Robinson (7) (164364)
 - 9.00pm News (7) and weather (2329)
 - 9.20pm National Lottery Update (423680)
 - 9.30pm Men Behaving Badly: Rich and Fat. The lads poke yet more fun at each other as Gary's secret stash of £33,000 is revealed (7) (53618)
 - 10.00pm Inside Story: Dial V for Vengeance Professionals. Dedicated to exacting revenge on their clients' good-for-nothing acquaintances, out a range of services, from quality pranks to more serious plots (7) (512400)
 - 10.45pm Match of the Day Gary Lineker. Introduces highlights of Manchester United v Southampton. Plus: all the goals and talking-points from tonight's other games in the top flight (7) (2329706)
 - 12.00pm Blood Ties (1991) Hadley Yerton, Michelle Johnson and Jason London star in this vampire thriller about a family of bloodsuckers whose corrupt and criminal acts gain them many enemies. Directed by Jim McBride (7) (72725)
 - 1.30am Weather (5027171)

- BBC2**
- 6.00am Open University: Paris and the New Mathematics (254849) 6.25pm Ticket to Fly (2340652) 6.50pm Regressing to Obscurity (5393874)
 - 7.15pm Sea Heat: Broadcast News (7) and signing (5048655)
 - 7.30pm Teletubbies (7) (4510077) 7.55pm Postman Pat (7) (1639665) 8.10pm Raccoons (7) (1534042) 8.30pm Get Your Own Back (7) (577348) 9.05pm Spiderman (7) (5291955) 9.30pm Smart (7) (57481) 10.00pm Teletubbies (7) (7211690)
 - 10.25pm Cricket: NatWest Trophy Live coverage of the opening session in the second semi-final of the 60-overs-a-side competition. Warwickshire take on the surprise semi-finalists Sussex (5761677)
 - 12.45pm Prime Linn's Tricks of the Trade (7) (5124484)
 - 12.55pm Today's Gourmet (7) (1034597)
 - 1.25pm Cricket: NatWest Trophy Further coverage through to the close of play in the second semi-final of the 60-overs-a-side competition between Warwickshire and Sussex (57653232)
 - 7.30pm The Day That Changed My Life: Down But Not Out. An illustration of the bitter reality of homelessness through the eyes of an Edinburgh man (7) (462)

- HTV**
- 6.00am GMTV (7741503)
 - 9.25pm Win, Lose or Draw (7) (529597)
 - 9.55pm Judge Judy (7) (510023)
 - 10.20pm News (7) (5945771)
 - 10.25pm Regional News (7) (5944042)
 - 10.30pm Eight Is Enough: Reunion (1987) Dick Van Patten and Mary Frann. Feature-length edition of the 1970s series about a couple with eight independent children. Directed by Harry Harris (51064145)
 - 12.20pm Regional News (4638145)
 - 12.30pm News (7) and weather (119232)
 - 12.55pm Shortland Street (1021023) 1.25pm Home and Away (7) (1406984) 1.50pm Side Effects (7) (514348) 2.40pm Murder, She Wrote (7) (502868)
 - 3.20pm News (7) (2525818)
 - 3.30pm Total TV (7) (583413) 3.40pm Ticket to Fly (540023) 3.50pm Cartoon Time (5842435) 4.00pm Mooney and Mages (2110435) 4.10pm Chatterbox Ponies (7) (505145) 4.25pm Art Attack (7) (2411752) 4.45pm Sabrina the Teenage Witch (7) (5292862)
 - 5.10pm Yan Can Cook: The Best of China (257416)
 - 5.40pm News (7) and weather (756503)
 - 6.00pm Home and Away (7) (427400)
 - 6.25pm HTV Tonight (303481)
 - 6.30pm The West Tonight (7) (684)
 - 7.00pm Emmerdale Emma reveals all about her to her stunned parents (7) (3680)

- CENTRAL**
- As HTV West except:
 - 10.30am Film: Sky West and Crooked (51064145)
 - 1.50pm-1.55pm A Country Practice (1021023)
 - 1.55-2.00pm Film: Man About the House (1585684)
 - 5.10-5.40pm Shortland Street (2657416)
 - 6.25-7.00pm Central News (752597)
 - 12.45pm Film: The Castle of Fu Manchu (594085)
 - 2.30pm Focus (684762)
 - 3.15pm The Chart Show (4611172)
 - 4.00pm Central Jobfinder '97 (3062820)
- WESTCOUNTRY**
- As HTV West except:
 - 10.30am Film: Sky West and Crooked (51064145)
 - 12.55pm Home and Away (8731394)
 - 1.20pm Emmerdale (582868)
 - 1.50-2.30pm Film: Carry on Cabby (1665884)
 - 5.10-5.40pm Home and Away (2657416)
 - 6.00-7.00pm Westcountry Live (63042)
- MERIDIAN**
- As HTV West except:
 - 10.30am Cartoon Time (2139771)
 - 10.40pm David the Gnome (3719690)
 - 11.05pm Cartoon Time (4688690)
 - 11.25pm BraveStarr (4591110)
 - 11.50pm Dinosaurs (5933416)
 - 1.50pm Summer Crafts (5884636)
 - 2.20-3.20pm Dr Quinn: Medicine Woman (5884023)
 - 5.10-5.40pm Home and Away (2657416)
 - 6.00pm Meridian Tonight (232)
 - 6.30-7.00pm The Channel Show (684)
- ANGLIA**
- As HTV West except:
 - 10.30am Cartoon Time (2139771)
 - 10.40pm David the Gnome (3719690)
 - 11.05pm Cartoon Time (4688690)
 - 11.25pm BraveStarr (4591110)
 - 11.50pm Dinosaurs (5933416)
 - 1.50pm Summer Crafts (5884636)
 - 2.20-3.20pm Dr Quinn: Medicine Woman (5884023)
 - 5.10-5.40pm Shortland Street (2657416)
 - 6.25-7.00pm Anglia News (782597)
 - 10.40-11.40pm There's Only One Barry Fry (326706)

- GRANADA 4**
- 6.00am Sesame Street (7) (88023)
 - 7.00pm The Bigger Breakfast Incorporating 9.05pm Saved by the Bell: The New Class 9.35pm The Secret World of Alex Mack 10.05pm Sister, Sister (7) 10.35pm The Crystal Maze (7) 11.35pm The Bigger Breakfast (1580023)
 - 12.05pm California Dreams (7) (7377619)
 - 12.30pm My So-Called Life (7) (5747705)
 - 1.25pm Counter Culture (7) (5136786)
 - 1.35pm Bob, Son of Bob (1947) with Edmund Gwern. The sentimental tale about a crusty old Scottish shepherd and his faithful sheepdog. Louis King directs (7) (41172139)
 - 3.30pm Here's One I Made Earlier Tuscan bean soup, spinach tart with red pesto, platters of fruit with mint gratin (7) (690)
 - 4.00pm Bewitched (7) (7) (597) 4.30pm Countdown (7) (547969) 4.55pm Ricki Lake (7) (7) (570252) 5.30pm Pat Rescue (7) (7) (961)
 - 6.00pm Snap! Showbiz (7) (674)
 - 6.30pm Roseanne (7) (7) (226)
 - 7.00pm Channel 4 News (7) (389058)
 - 7.50pm Girls, Girls, Girls Young women in the 1950s talk about the importance of money to their lives (310706)
 - 8.00pm Brookside Rachel asks Christian for the truth. Will Jimmy's dream of becoming a teacher be thwarted by Olivia? (7) (4732)
 - 8.30pm Miles from Nowhere (1991) A made-for-television medical drama starring Rick Schroder as a promising athletics student who decides to nurse his brother after he falls into a coma. Also with James Farentino. Directed by Buzz Kulik (7) (46676481)
 - 10.15pm Space Cadets Sci-fi comedy quiz (7) (503955)

- CHANNEL 5 ON SATELLITE**
- Channel 5 is now broadcasting on transponder No 63 on the Astra Satellite. Viewers with a Videocrypt decoder will be able to receive the channel free of charge. Frequencies for transponder No 63 are: picture: 10.92075 GHz; sound: 7.02 and 7.20 MHz
- 6.00am 5 News Early (7684752)
 - 7.30pm Havalakko (580042) 8.00pm The Enid Blyton Adventure Series (2713313)
 - 8.30pm WideWorld Dr Mark Porter explains why we are all genetically unique (2713364)
 - 9.00pm Exposed (538752) 10.00pm Exclusive (7) (537329) 10.30pm Nights of Fancy (7) (2805348)
 - 11.00pm Lanza (2032329) 11.50pm Double Espresso (33552058) 12.00pm The Bold and the Beautiful (7) (2716400) 12.30pm Family Affairs (7) (7) (7563333)
 - 1.00pm 5 News Update (7) (22542619) 1.05pm Sunset Beach (7) (1670955) 2.00pm 5's Company (3087110)
 - 3.30pm The Toughest Man in the World (1984) With Mr T. Dennis Duggan and John P. Navin Jr. A Vietnam veteran enters the "Toughest Man in the World" contest to save a centre for troubled kids. Directed by Dick Lowry (5056121)
 - 5.20pm 5's Company: Late Extra (60231139)
 - 5.30pm 100 Percent (5122619)
 - 6.00pm Move on Up (7) (5112232)
 - 6.30pm Family Affairs The lads return early from their holiday but they will not say why (7) (5030684)
 - 7.00pm Exclusive Showbiz gossip with Julia Bradbury and Imogen Edwards-Jones. Includes a report on whether Hollywood has simply run out of ideas (155664)
 - 7.30pm Small Miracles: Industrial Action. An insight into the life of the bee and the important role it plays in the countryside (7) (5036888)
 - 8.00pm Instant Gardens The horticultural guru William van Hage redesigns a typical back garden in Birmingham with the help of the Instant Gardens computer (465067)
 - 8.30pm 5 News with Kirsty Young (7) (4650164)

- SKY 1**
- 6.00am Morning Glory (726151) 6.00pm Kids and Kudos Live (572658) 6.30pm The World of David Copperfield (7) (524868)
 - 11.40pm 12.00pm Oprah Winfrey (54236)
 - 12.00pm Comedy (7) (524868) 2.30pm Sally Jessy Raphael (524868) 3.00pm Jerry Springer: The Man (1995) 3.30pm Real TV (524868) 4.00pm Generation (5077) 5.00pm Real TV (524868) 6.00pm Mervyn - with Chelton (5451)
 - 7.00pm The Simpsons (7700) 7.30pm M*A*S*H (7) (524868) 8.00pm Mervyn - with Chelton (5451) 8.30pm Mervyn - with Chelton (5451) 9.00pm Mervyn - with Chelton (5451) 9.30pm Mervyn - with Chelton (5451) 10.00pm Mervyn - with Chelton (5451) 10.30pm Mervyn - with Chelton (5451) 11.00pm Mervyn - with Chelton (5451) 11.30pm Mervyn - with Chelton (5451) 12.00pm Mervyn - with Chelton (5451)
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- SKY 2**
- 7.00pm Superboy (713465) 7.30pm Superboy (713465) 8.00pm Superboy (713465) 8.30pm Superboy (713465) 9.00pm Superboy (713465) 9.30pm Superboy (713465) 10.00pm Superboy (713465) 10.30pm Superboy (713465) 11.00pm Superboy (713465) 11.30pm Superboy (713465) 12.00pm Superboy (713465)
- SKY NEWS**
- 6.00am News coverage with bulletins on the hour, 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- SKY MOVIES**
- 10.00pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 10.30pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 11.00pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 11.30pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 12.00pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 12.30pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 1.00pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 1.30pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 2.00pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 2.30pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 3.00pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 3.30pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 4.00pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 4.30pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 5.00pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 5.30pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 6.00pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 6.30pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 7.00pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 7.30pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 8.00pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 8.30pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 9.00pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 9.30pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 10.00pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 10.30pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 11.00pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 11.30pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 12.00pm Clash of the Titans (1979) 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GOLF 38

Parnevik destined to miss out on Ryder Cup

SPORT

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 13 1997

SAILING 38

Close finish illuminates Fastnet Race



Shameful scenes mar semi-final

Angry players shove cricket into darkness

By ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

CHELMSFORD (Essex won toss): Essex, with two wickets in hand, need six runs to beat Glamorgan.

AMID bad blood and even worse light, the first of the NatWest Trophy semi-finals was adjourned in chaos and confusion at 8.10pm last night. Essex were six runs short of their target, with 6.1 overs remaining, when the umpires were given no option but to take the players off in the middle of an over from Glamorgan's Waqar Younis.

A match in which ill feeling was seldom far below the surface then brought disreputable scenes, with two England players, Mark Ilett and Robert Croft, pushing each other as they argued over the merits of the situation. An inquiry into the circumstances is inevitable.

The entire game had been combustible, though much it was of compelling quality. Stuart Law often looks an angry young man, sometimes with justification. He has a grouse with the Australian selectors who decline to pick him and, yesterday, he had a spat with Darren Thomas for being careless enough to bowl him a bouncer. Law summar-



Stuart Law: dashing

ly won the argument with Thomas to sweep Essex towards their second successive NatWest Trophy final and soon, surely, he will win his point with the Australians. Law struck 90 from only 73 balls at his adoring, perspiring second home of Chelmsford and, after that, it seemed, even the notably nervy chasers of Essex would make light of a target of 302. Not so. Despite a heroic half-century from Ronnie Irani, playing with a torn rib cartilage, they had declined to 206 for eight when

the controversial end came. Glamorgan, buoyed by a century from Steve James, were entitled to believe they were on their way to a first Lord's final in 20 years but Law wasted no time in disabusing them. Waqar Younis was seen off after three overs costing 24 and Law had made 44 out of 77 when Thomas hit him full toss on the glove during the 12th over.

The Queenslander was incensed, and not a little pained. In swift succession he hurled down his bat and both gloves while offering Thomas the benefit of his opinions. Thomas waved a perfunctory apology but, having claimed in a newspaper preview that he looked forward to mixing it with Law, he did not look the picture of remorse.

Law took an age to compose himself but then treated Thomas to both barrels — venomous strokes accompanied by apparently vengeful words. When he holed out to long-off in the 24th over, he strode off pointing accusingly at another Glamorgan player who had evidently had something to say.

Nasser Hussain, granted a timely chance to display his leadership ability by a hamstring injury to Paul Prichard, opted to bowl first and must have been congratulating himself when Hugh Morris squatted the tenth ball of the innings to Law at gully. Once the rain had cleared, though, so did the approach of the Welsh and the second wicket added 102 in 29 overs.

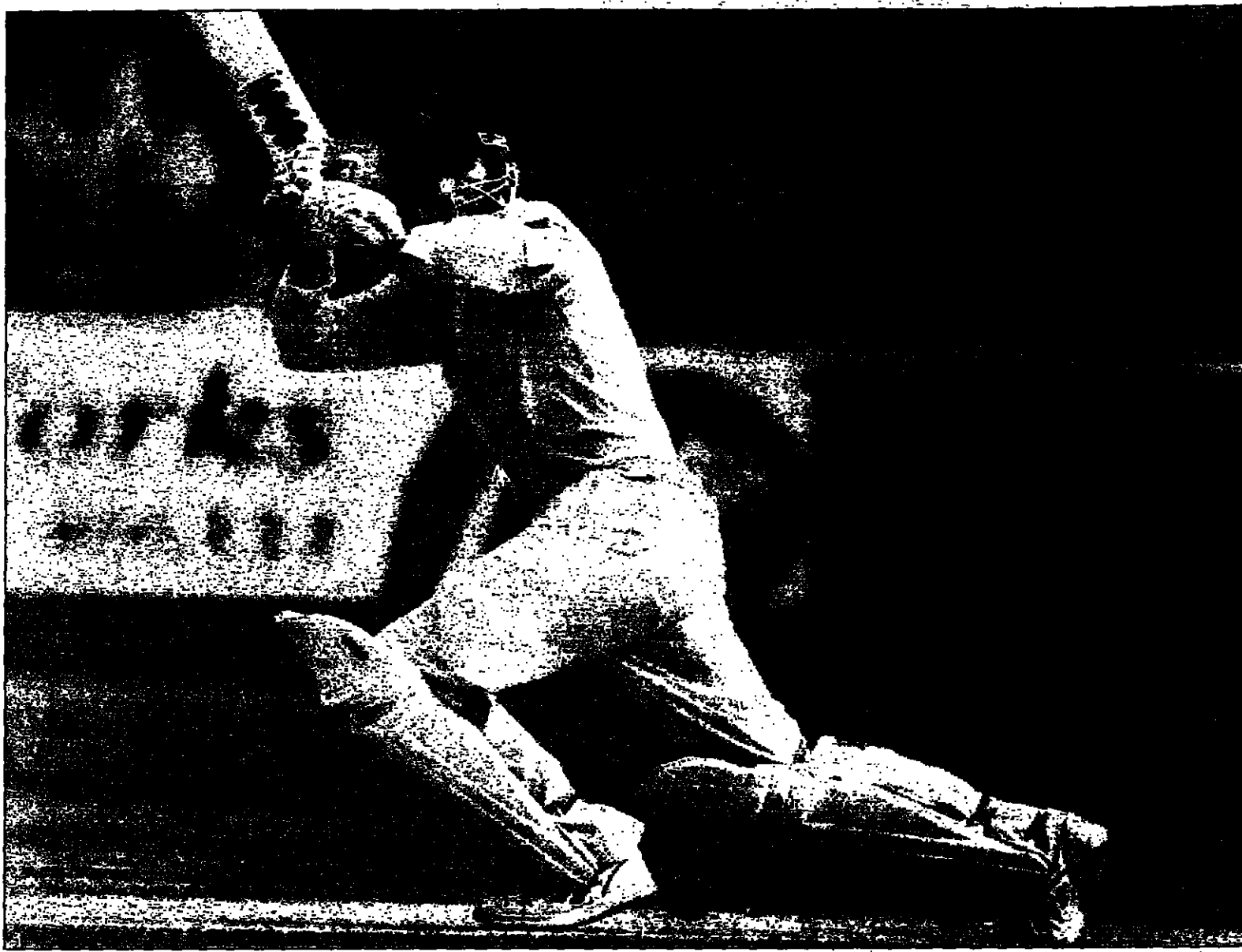
James, who heads the first-class managers to make hundreds without playing a memorable shot, simply working the ball into the gaps. His century here contained only five fours. Only time and opportunity will tell if his technique can thrive at higher level but he can hardly make a stronger claim.

Essex's outcricket was below par, both Dale and Cottee being expensively dropped, and when Irani was forced off midway through his tenth over, the Welsh contingent burst into *Land of my Fathers*. They were still more euphoric when the last ten overs produced 82 runs, but it proved premature.

After 20 overs of the reply, Law and Darren Robinson, a positive but sensible partner, had rushed to 122. Other than a run-out chance, squandered by Shaw, Glamorgan did not sniff success until Law perished, aiming for a second straight six off Butcher.

When the estimable Watkin rallied from early punishment to dismiss Hussain and Robinson in consecutive overs, Essex wobbled. They have been here before, losing big games when it seemed easier to win, but Grayson, a thoroughly sound cricketer, joined Irani, who had been given a painkilling injection, in a calming stand of 60.

ITC details, page 38
Jaysauri shines, page 41
Line and Length, page 41
Simon Barnes, page 42



James, Glamorgan's century-maker, clips the ball to mid-wicket during his well-paced innings. Photograph: Laurence Griffiths / Allsport

Dalglish savours striking difference

By OLIVER HOULT, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

THEY told Kenny Dalglish that today was Alan Shearer's birthday and he shrugged his shoulders. It was suggested that maybe Dalglish would like to win Newcastle United's European Cup preliminary round match against Croatia Zagreb to-night for his stricken striker and he shot back a contemptuous stare. He was asked when Shearer might be fit again. "He won't be playing tomorrow night," he said.

The continuing obsession with the minutiae of Shearer's injury has already exhausted Dalglish's limited fund of patience as he tries to coax Newcastle and their supporters into life without the England striker for a large part of the season. Yesterday, at a press conference at the club's picturesque training ground on the outskirts of Durham,

he found the perfect escape route.

In the absence of Shearer and the recently-departed Les Ferdinand, the goalscoring burden has been placed at the unpredictable feet of Faustino Asprilla, the maverick Colombian who it was widely assumed would be one of the first casualties of the Dalglish reign at St James' Park.

Instead, Asprilla has begun to show signs of finding the form that made him such a feared striker with Parma in Serie A and prompted Kevin Keegan to buy him towards the end of the 1995-96 season in a doomed attempt to clinch the FA Carling Premiership title.

He scored both Newcastle's goals — one a thunderous volley after a clever header from Albert — in the 2-1 victory over Sheffield Wednesday on Saturday and Dalglish left his listeners in little doubt yesterday that he believes

Asprilla is a more than capable deputy for his talismanic No 9.

"If the preconception was that he was not my type of player," Dalglish said, "that is because you have been misinformed. I never had any preconceived ideas about the

PROBABLE TEAMS

NEWCASTLE UNITED (3-4-1-1): S. Giver — A. Platt, P. Albert, S. Pearce — D. Batty, R. Lee, S. Watson, T. Koolhaas, K. Gillespie — J. D. Tomkinson — F. Asprilla. CROATIA ZAGREB (3-4-1-2): D. Ladic — S. Medic, G. Jurić, D. Simić — D. Savić, S. Markić, K. Jurić, J. Kozar — R. Prizmić — M. Vekić, I. Čolaković.

fella and, at the end of last year, he was brilliant for us when he played up front with Shearer.

"He can play on his own in attack, as he is doing now, but he can adapt to most situations. There is no other player like him in the league. If there

was, we would want him here. The funny thing about him is that he always looks shattered.

Even if he has been on for five minutes and he is just walking around, he looks shattered. He was getting the team picture done yesterday and he looked shattered. Then, suddenly, he just bursts into action.

Dalglish admitted that Newcastle, who will revert to playing in the UEFA Cup if they lose the two-legged tie to the Croats, who used to be called Dinamo Zagreb, "will either have to play very well or be very lucky, or hopefully both", to progress into the Champions League.

Zagreb, who have the former Barcelona and Real Madrid midfielder, Robert Prosinecki, in their ranks, have won the Croatian league for the past two seasons, last year by 21 points, and warmed up for the match tonight with a 6-2 thrashing of Varteks on

Saturday. In the previous round, they beat Partizan Belgrade 5-1 on aggregate.

Their star striker, Igor Cvitanović, said his team had been upset over claims that Dalglish had said he had never heard of Croatia Zagreb. "English teams are full of arrogant and cold people," he said. "They are not interested in anybody but themselves. They always think they are the greatest."

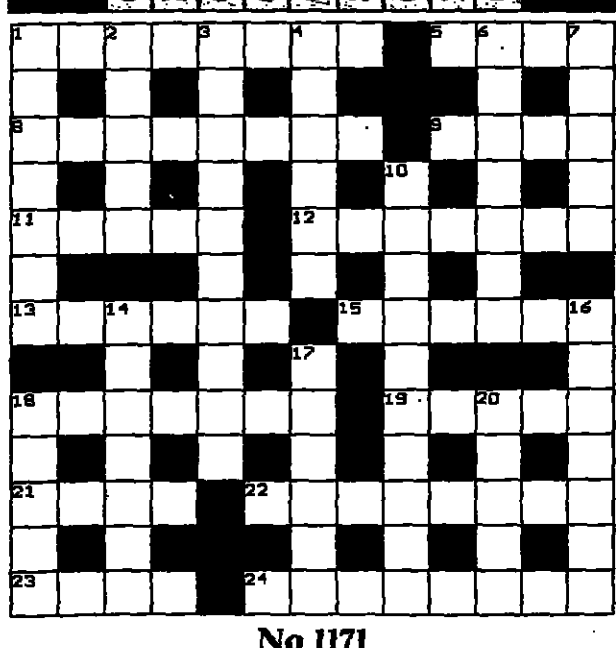
Dalglish, however, emphasised that he has the utmost respect for Newcastle's opponents, especially as his own record as a manager in Europe has been restricted to Blackburn Rovers' defeat by Helsingborgs and Newcastle's loss to AS Monaco last season. "I have not had the same success in Europe as I did when I was a player," Dalglish said, "but this is not about me. It is about the players."

United prepare, page 40

CHELMSFORD SCOREBOARD

GLAMORGAN	ESSEX
S P James c Robinson b Grayson ... 109	S P James c Robinson b Grayson ... 109
H Morris c S G Law b Cottee ... 45	H Morris c S G Law b Cottee ... 45
A Dale c Cowen b Grayson ... 45	A Dale c Cowen b Grayson ... 45
M P Maynard run out ... 26	M P Maynard run out ... 26
P A Cottee c Grayson b Ilett ... 26	P A Cottee c Grayson b Ilett ... 26
R D B Croft run out ... 14	R D B Croft run out ... 14
G P Butcher not out ... 18	G P Butcher not out ... 18
FA D Shaw run out ... 0	FA D Shaw run out ... 0
S D Thomas c S G Law b Cowen ... 1	S D Thomas c S G Law b Cowen ... 1
Extras (8 w, 10 nb) ... 25	Extras (8 w, 10 nb) ... 25
Total (38 wickets, 53.1 overs) ... 301	Total (38 wickets, 53.1 overs) ... 301
Waqar Younis and S G Law did not bat	Waqar Younis and S G Law did not bat
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-13, 2-115, 3-165, 4-251, 5-278, 6-291, 7-294, 8-301	FALL OF WICKETS: 1-13, 2-115, 3-165, 4-251, 5-278, 6-291, 7-294, 8-301
BOWLING: Ilett 12-2-50-1, Cowen 12-0-32-2, Irani 9-2-0-36-0, S G Law 6-4-0-37-0, Such 12-0-56-0, Grayson 9-0-51-2	BOWLING: Ilett 12-2-50-1, Cowen 12-0-32-2, Irani 9-2-0-36-0, S G Law 6-4-0-37-0, Such 12-0-56-0, Grayson 9-0-51-2
ESSEX	ESSEX
D D J Robinson c Cottee b Watkin ... 82	D D J Robinson c Cottee b Watkin ... 82
S G Law c Waqar b Butcher ... 90	S G Law c Waqar b Butcher ... 90
N Hussain c Maynard b Watkin ... 28	N Hussain c Maynard b Watkin ... 28
R C Ilett run out b Thomas ... 21	R C Ilett run out b Thomas ... 21
A P Grayson c Shaw b Thomas ... 22	A P Grayson c Shaw b Thomas ... 22
D P Law b Thomas ... 17	D P Law b Thomas ... 17
R J Baines c James b Thomas ... 2	R J Baines c James b Thomas ... 2
A P Cowen bow b Thomas ... 2	A P Cowen bow b Thomas ... 2
T P Hodgson not out ... 0	T P Hodgson not out ... 0
M C Ilett not out ... 0	M C Ilett not out ... 0
Extras (8 w, 6 nb) ... 22	Extras (8 w, 6 nb) ... 22
Total (38 wickets, 53.1 overs) ... 286	Total (38 wickets, 53.1 overs) ... 286
P M Such to bat	P M Such to bat
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-150, 2-184, 3-195, 4-258, 5-260, 6-288, 7-295, 8-295	FALL OF WICKETS: 1-150, 2-184, 3-195, 4-258, 5-260, 6-288, 7-295, 8-295
BOWLING: Watkin 12-1-64-2, Waqar Younis 8-1-45-0, Thomas 11-0-70-4, Croft 12-0-47-0, Butcher 7-0-38-1, Dale 2-0-21-0	BOWLING: Watkin 12-1-64-2, Waqar Younis 8-1-45-0, Thomas 11-0-70-4, Croft 12-0-47-0, Butcher 7-0-38-1, Dale 2-0-21-0
Umpires: J C Balderson and D J Constant	Umpires: J C Balderson and D J Constant

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1171

- ACROSS
- Protector (8)
 - Demonstrate (4)
 - Free French leader (2,6)
 - Courage, stone particles (4)
 - Stand for painting (5)
 - Valueless material (7)
 - Run-down; ignoble (6)
 - Assimilate; a summary (6)
 - Decide; determination (7)
 - Paperwork (colloq.) (5)
 - Prejudice (4)
 - Member of gov't clergy (8)
 - Depression (in knocked surface) (4)
 - Feeling gratitude (8)
- DOWN
- Altheistic (7)
 - Protection (esp. under the —) (5)
 - Two plays in one show (6,4)
 - Glamorous attraction (6)
 - Brave woman (7)
 - Observer; timepiece (5)
 - Duty; debt (10)
 - Refrain (from) (7)
 - Shoot of climbing plant (7)
 - Die, fall (6)
 - Mad (with disease) (5)
 - Distinctive idea (art) (5)

SOLUTION TO NO 1170: 1 Hooligan 9 Murder 10 Samuel 11 Wine 12 Cupidity 15 Natchez 17 Bury 18 Thomas 21 Becket 22 Astutism 23 Leer

DOWN: 1 Figurine 2 Doodle 3 Short cut 4 Boss 5 Dimmed 6 Café 13 Parabola 14 Turgeon 16 Armour 17 Buckle 19 Hour 20 Sink

SOLUTION TO TIMES TWO CROSSWORD 1166
In association with BRITISH MIDLAND

ACROSS: 1 Rack 3 Stagnary 8 Tibetan 10 Super 11 Concomitant 13 Natchez 15 Adhere 17 Precious few 20 Scroop 21 Sumner 22 Spectral 23 Aged

DOWN: 1 Reincarnate 2 Cabin 4 Tennis 5 Toss and turn 6 Amputee 7 Yurt 9 Trouble spot 12 New World 14 Suppose 16 Miasma 18 Flung 19 As is

1st PRIZE of a return ticket to travelling economy class to anywhere on BRITISH MIDLAND's domestic or international network is J Midland, Cowley, Oxford.

2nd PRIZE of a return ticket to anywhere on BRITISH MIDLAND's domestic network is L Chappell, Duns, Berwickshire.

All flights subject to availability.

Barnes spurns Redknapp

By DAVID MADDOCK

JOHN BARNES agreed to join Newcastle United on a free transfer last night, only hours after shaking hands on a deal with Harry Redknapp, the West Ham United manager.

The Liverpool midfielder player travelled to London for talks with Redknapp yesterday and quickly agreed a contract. It seems, however, that Barnes suffered a moment of uncertainty and made what has amounted to an embarrassing U-turn.

Redknapp was proclaiming that Barnes was his man early in the evening and he added, almost with uncertainty, that he would be very upset should the player change his mind.

"I don't think he will, because he's one of the most

honest professionals around," he said. By then, though, Barnes had already talked to Kenny Dalglish, the Newcastle manager and the man who took him to Anfield. The lure of European football and the chance to chase top honours at St James' Park appears to have persuaded him to change his mind.

Barnes will travel to Newcastle today for a medical and will join the North-East club on a two-year contract worth more than £1.5 million. The free transfer ends a ten-year association with Liverpool, where the 33-year-old made more than 400 appearances for the club after Dalglish, then manager at Anfield, paid Watford £900,000 for him in 1987.

If, as expected, the deal is

completed before the end of the week, Barnes will be eligible to play for Newcastle in the Champions League, should they qualify by beating Croatia Zagreb over a two-leg preliminary-round contest.

David Platt turned down a move to Middlesbrough last night, but has not ruled out leaving Arsenal. The England midfielder player had been tempted by a move to the Riverside Stadium to join up with Paul Merson, his former team-mate, but decided against it.

Platt said: "I have decided that it would not be the right career move for me at this point in time. I am grateful to Arsenal for their understanding — Arsène Wenger [the manager] has told me that he wants me to stay at the club."

Clubs united on issue of sin

David Hands, rugby correspondent, on radical plans for the new domestic season

English rugby union's new-found accord is one thing, but the game's administrative capabilities are quite another. The Allied Dunbar Premiership launched its inaugural season at Twickenham yesterday with a commitment to the introduction of the sin-bin, without any such regulation having been formulated or approved.

Still, the pace of change may yet be sufficient for the sin-bin to be in place by August 23, the first weekend of competition for England's leading 24 clubs. The feeling among refereeing officials is that its implementation would be relatively straightforward, but that, perhaps, referees could be given as much notice as possible.

If the Rugby Football Union (RFU) accepts the pro-

posed competition regulations, then games in the Premiership first and second divisions will have ten-minute half-time intervals, home and away play-offs to determine promotion and relegation and the ten-minute sin-bin for persistent technical infringement. The intention, after a meeting last week between club directors and referees, is to punish the professional foul.

"We want to stop players who seek to prevent a try by killing the ball, or wrapping it up in the tackle, or by going outside," Donald Kerr, chairman of the English Rugby Partnership — the organisers of competition for the leading 24 clubs — said. "We have

listened to players, we have talked to the RFU and we see no reason why it should not be available to referees by the start of the Premiership."

At present, however, there is only a draft regulation that has gone to Nick Burdett, the RFU referees development officer, who is on holiday, and no meeting of the RFU management board is scheduled until August 29.

There was no mistaking the enthusiasm, though, of club executives for the season that lies ahead. After the politics that have bedevilled the sport, they seek to present the English club game in the best possible light and Allied Dunbar, the insurance company,

will plough £12 million into the sport over the next three years.

"Today is about taking the game on to its next stage ... about giving it the resources to go forward into the next century," Steve Melcher, the Allied Dunbar chief executive, said.

The new Premiership champions will receive £66,000 and the runners-up £30,000, but new regulations also allow disciplinary proceedings against clubs that avoid the proper channels when approaching players.

To avoid clashes of interest between club and country, clubs can postpone matches if they lose five or more players for international duty, but must give ten days' notice, which will create problems if national selectors delay the nomination of their squads.

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